

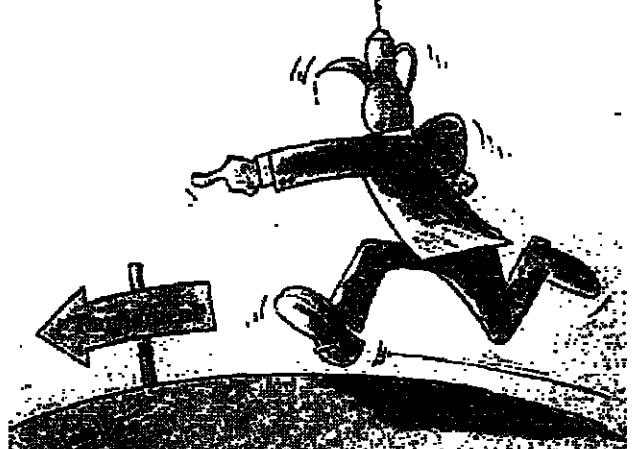
Window on Jordan

Elections and tribes In Karak, the youngsters are answering a different call

By Raed Al Abed
Star Staff Writer
Karak—Under the shadow of the election banners that promise Karakis everything from health insurance to jobs to social justice, Sa'ad, a young man in his mid-20s, looks indifferently and shrugs as he walks away.

He says he does not trust the slogans written on these banners hanging over the city's streets and alleyways. "I had a bad experience with these slogans," he says as he points to the banners. Eying one, Sa'ad says with a cool voice, that the candidate who is promising good things to Karakis is not even living in the city. "He lived most of his life in Amman," he says.

Like other young Karakis, Sa'ad meets with his friends at the Karak Circle in the center of the town of 20,000 inhabitants where a statue of Salah Al Din Al Ayoubi on his horse brandishing a sword sits. The Karak Circle faces the big mosque, where the spark of the bread riots of last year was ignited. The riots then spread to other southern towns and lasted for days.



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Government launches PR campaign to fend off allegations of election irregularities

By a Star Staff Writer
THE GOVERNMENT is launching an intensive public relations campaign to thwart mounting allegations of irregularities surrounding preparations for the 4th November elections. The Cabinet appointed a seasoned media personality, Dr Mazen Al Armouti, as the official spokesman for the elections.

Dr Al Armouti, who is also an ambassador-designate to Austria, is the former head of the Institute of Diplomacy and has served as an adviser to HRH Crown Prince Hassan.

In his first press conference at the Prime Ministry, Dr Armouti announced on Tuesday a package of strict measures to put an end to the prevailing confusion regarding voter cards distribution process.

That process has resulted in widespread anarchy in many districts, including Amman. They included the illegal acquisition of hundreds of voting cards from election stations by some candidates.

The government has asked candidates who were in possession of ballot cards to return them immediately or face the consequences, Dr Armouti announced on Tuesday.

Today, Thursday, is the last day for voters to receive their election cards. It is still unclear how voters are responding to appeals to collect their ballot cards. The government has even issued a religious fatwa to encourage people to vote. But independent observers believe people's concern with receiving their cards is weak.

Official figures say more than 1.3 million voters, about 70 percent of the 1.9 million registered voters, received

their election cards. But with many candidates forging receipt forms to receive voting cards, it is unclear how many voters are actually in possession of their cards.

The confusion over the distributing process has embarrassed the government, which keeps stressing that it will oversee the holding of a fair and free elections. But as a growing number of voters have complained about not finding their cards at the designated polling stations, the government felt it must intervene to save the situation.

It is not clear how officials at these stations allowed candidates to receive hundreds of voter cards. But Dr Armouti said that while the government admits that there were some administrative loopholes, the irregularities were unintentional. He brushed aside calls for a postponement of the elections. He added that candidates who have received voter cards must return them or face legal charges.

In many cases candidates hold voting cards of registered voters to guarantee their votes, or in some cases they would 'hide' the cards of voters who support competing candidates.

As to the problem of duplicate cards, where in some cases four or six cards were issued to one voter, Dr Armouti said no voter will be allowed to poll more than once and anyone who does will be violating the law.

In recent weeks, the government said it had arrested persons who had forged voting cards. In one case, the authorities arrested two men for forging 9468 election cards in favor of one of the candidates for Amman's Fourth District.

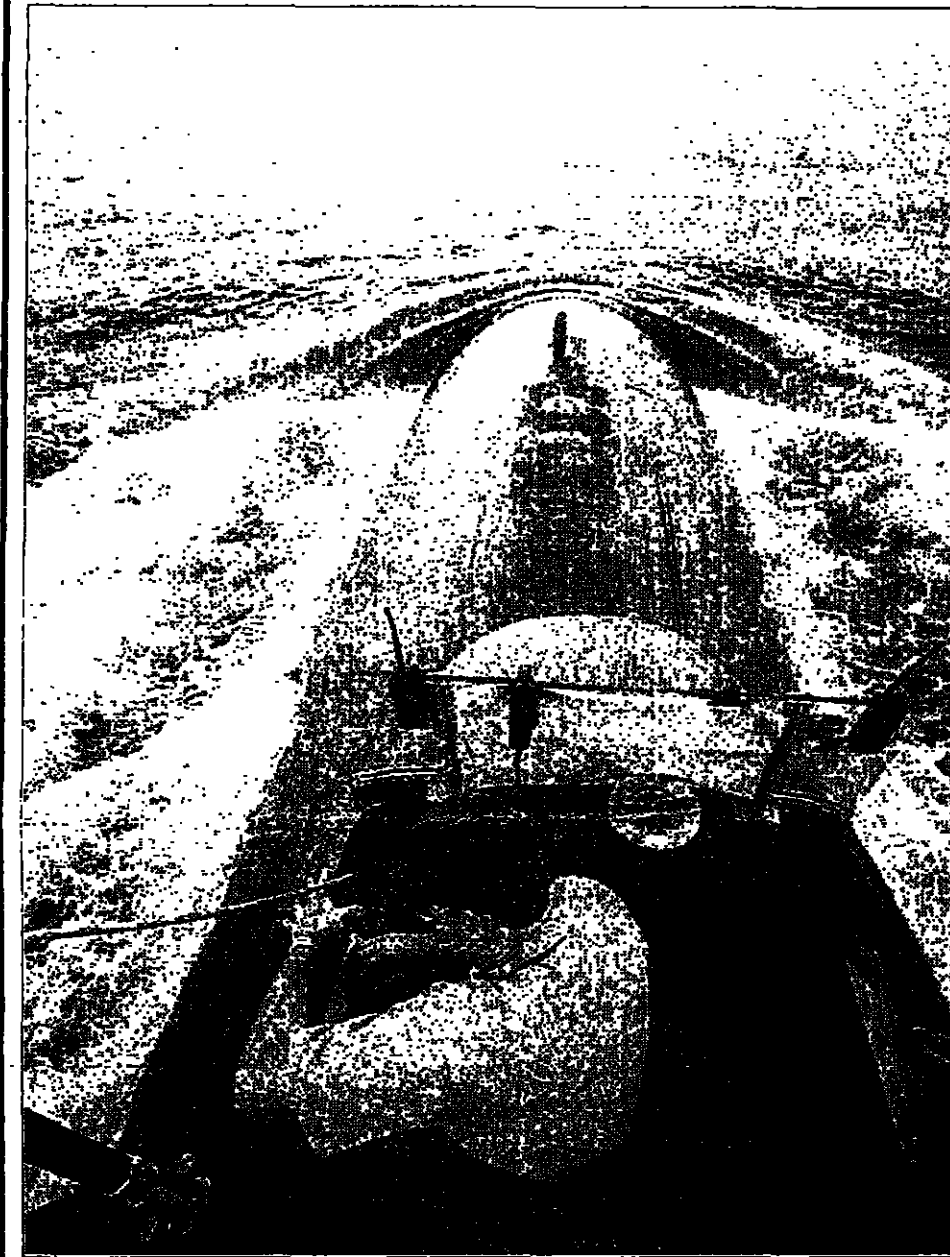
With increasing reports of irregularities, the government found itself obliged to hit hard to save its credibility and that of the elections.

Dr Armouti announced that computer disks containing the final list of registered voters in the Amman area were made available to journalists on Monday, while voters' lists for other constituencies will be distributed to the media at a later date.

In the light of the latest development, the new measures ask voters to present identification documents such as passports, official ID cards, family books or driving licenses, together with their voting cards. These documents will be stamped after voting to avoid vote duplication.

Several opposition candidates have voiced their concern over the prospect of voting by members of the security and armed forces, who are barred from voting according to the Elections Law. Dr Armouti explained that "the law stipulates that all Jordanian citizens have the right to register their names, including soldiers."

However, he added the concerned authorities will make sure that soldiers do not cast their votes, since their names are especially marked on the computer lists.



SUBMARINES: A crewman on the US submarine Salt Lake City monitors the sea at sunrise. The submarine is on a training mission off Southern California. On board there are 14 officers and 116 enlisted men. The submarine record is 105 days submerged. Launched in 1982, the cigar-shaped Salt Lake City is 360 feet long, 33 feet wide at the beam and weighs 7,000 tons. The Navy tells the world that the San Diego-based Salt Lake City, and other submarines of the same design, have a speed of 25 knots and a diving depth of 800 feet. (Los Angeles Times photo by Gary Friedman.)

Article 19 lashes out at press law, calls for its repeal

Amman (Star)—Article 19, the International Centre Against Censorship, has strongly criticized the temporary Press and Publication Law and called on the government to repeal the May 1997 amendments and to guarantee freedom of expression under the Constitution.

In a report entitled *Blaming the Press: Jordan's Democratization Process in Crisis*, the London-based human rights organization said the "tightening of official controls over the media in the run-up to the latest legislative elections has been widely interpreted as a response to increasing criticism of the government and its policies by Jordan's newly emergent weekly press."

The 105 page report was released during the opening of a seminar on Media and Press Freedom in Jordan on Tuesday.

It said domestic and international factors, including political and economic pressures resulting from Jordan's peace treaty with Israel and "the government's nervousness about the media, and its capacity to be a purveyor of information unpalatable to the authorities," may have led to the 1997 Press Law amendments which represent a "real setback."

The report criticized the manner of the introduction of the amendments and their timing before the general elections.

The report called on the government to adopt urgent reforms to comply with international obligations and the Jordanian Constitution. It said such reform "is essential if Jordanian society is to attain full democratic maturity."

Article 19 suggested that Jordan guarantees that freedom of expression should supersede legislative functions: that Jordan ratifies the (first) Optional Protocol of the International Covenant on Civil and Political Rights (ICCPR), which allows individuals to bring complaints directly before the UN Human Rights Committee; and that the government should end its monopoly over radio and television and its ownership of the print media.

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Workshop voices concern for press freedom in Jordan

By Ibtisam Awadat
Special to The Star
FORTY SPEAKERS and more than 100 participants gathered this week to take part in the venue titled "Media and Press Freedom in Jordan."

The two-day seminar was organized jointly by Al Urdun Al Jadid Research Center (UJRC), Article 19, the International Centre Against Censorship and the newly established Arab Media Institute.

Media professionals have come from the United Kingdom, United States, Germany as well as Jordan.

"We are holding this seminar to demonstrate the importance of discussing the position of the press and media in Jordan especially after the new amendments to the Press and Publications Law which resulted in the closure of a lot of weeklies," says Dr Taleb Awad, executive director of the UJRC.

"The wide participation in the venue means that people want to make the development of laws in away that service democracy, freedom of expression and human rights in Jordan," Mr Awad adds.

Human rights are key words for Article 19, the International Center Against Censorship. It began its work 10 years ago, taking its name from the Universal declaration

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Karak tribes back their official candidates in the race to Parliament

By Raed Al Abed
Star Staff Writer
Karak—Parliamentary elections in this part of the country occupies the concern of politicians around the Kingdom since this constituency witnessed violent protests against bread prices last year.

Forty candidates are running for seven Muslim seats, while another seven are competing for the two Christian seats in the governorate. Official figures say 85,000 out of the 98,000 eligible voters have received their card, forming about 68 percent, according to official figures.

After their experience, in the 1993 elections, with the single vote system, the Karakis decided to change their tactics this time. Many of Karak's big tribes have decided to field one candidate to represent each of them in the elections.

This is the surest way to getting their representative to the Lower House. The choice was between prominent tribal figures.

However, only three big tribes were able to reach a consensus on one candidate only. Khaled Al Tarawneh, a retired general in the Jordanian Army, received the consensus of the Al Tarawneh tribe. Al Ghassaneh tribe agreed on Mr Aayed Al Adhaleh, a newcomer to the public scene with independent pan-Arabist views. And the Al Sarayrah tribe voted for Riyad Al Sarayrah, a former government

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A day with Bright Star in the Egyptian desert

By Samir Rafat
Star Cairo Correspondent
I MADE it from the Cairo suburb of Maadi to a five-star hotel near the Giza pyramids in 17 minutes! By car not by helicopter. It was 04:15 and most of Cairo's 16 million inhabitants were fast asleep. I was to rendezvous with a luxury bus that would take 20 journalists and photographers to a beach front a hundred and some kilometers west of Alexandria.

We had been invited to watch epoch-making war games code named Bright Star '97 starring crack land, air and sea forces from the United States, France, Italy, the UK and Egypt. The scheduled joint military exercise that day was taking place on a site near where Field Marshals Rommel and Montgomery had directed the fiercest tank gunnery in the history of mechanized warfare. Fifty five years later, we were going

to observe state of the art hardware in motion the likes of which would've made the Third Reich's panzerarmee look like a child's Lego.

From the freshmen journalist sitting next to me I learned that there were over 6,000 American GIs and officers taking part in the fortnight-long exercise. In fact, one of them was on our bus and would shortly brief us on the day's event. Even as the major greeted us with a hearty "howdy'all" my bus companion's face lit up. As it turned out, both men were Confederate descendants from the America's deep South.

A few half hours later and we were treated to a breathtaking desert daybreak. How could anyone think of war in such awesome surroundings.

Since its inception in 1981, Bright Star's biannual exercises brought together elite

forces from Egypt and several NATO countries in what a veteran journalist termed "the most important simulated war on desert terrain."

Bright Star was interrupted in 1991 when the real thing took place on the borders of Kuwait and Iraq. This was also when CNN scored a reporting coup smack in the middle of the American networks' evening newscasts. "Whoa! Holy cow! bright flashes and blazing stars are lighting up the sky west of the city," was how ABC's correspondent in Baghdad reported live the unfolding hostilities. As one Late Night talk-show host later put it, "Desert Storm was when Iraq went to war and America played Nintendo."

When our bus arrived at the beach front, the first thing we saw was a titanic made-in-USA earth moving bulldozer going back and forth along the beach. I was told this was necessary because the seashore was littered with plastic bags and trash. It wouldn't do to have a televised amphibious landing on a virtual dump. The remark



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Elections in Irbid

What do the people think

By Elise Y. Sadoun
Special to The Star

IRBID—As the elections season revs up to full throttle, citizens have mixed opinion about the outcome. With 542 candidates bidding for 80 parliamentary seats, a frenzy of campaign activity is well under way.

In the mean time banners advertising candidates are strung all over the town and villages, sometimes so thickly that people cannot even see down the street. Election flyers with the candidates' photographs are pasted everywhere: in store windows, on light poles and mailboxes, in car windows, and even on traffic signs.

Constituents are offered free cans of carbonated beverages, and candidates serve Mansaf nightly in a strong effort to gain support. Candidates have no lack of ingenuity in advertising themselves, and some even paint their cars. With campaign slogans, TV and radio ads have also been a very popular advertising medium.

All or most of the registration cards have been delivered to voters' homes. But there is apathy on the part of some. Voting is somewhat difficult as those who have moved to Irbid from the outlying villages must drive back to those villages on elections day in order to vote.

Of those registered, most intend to vote in the upcoming elections. A few have still not decided on a candidate as elections day draws nearer. Those who have decided on a candidate have made their choice for many different reasons. Although some have chosen friends or relatives, many have chosen on the basis of merit.

Bilal Al Ashkar, a Jordanian of Palestinian origin, and business manager, said "I will choose Mr. Hassan Jaradat because he is an ideal man with good manners. He is an objective man, and he has good program to promote services for the citizens of Jordan."

Sabah Aburaj, a Jordanian woman who manages a factory and an oil processing plant is voting for Dr. Ghazi Obeidat because he "is a highly educated man with a lot of hope, and the confidence to promote this country. He has an open mind. He is kind, intelligent, polite with his constituents, and a good listener."

On the other hand, Mr. Yasser Abu Salem, a manager of a corner store stated that he chose his favorite candidate because he knows him personally, and knows that the candi-

date is a generous man who cares about people and will do anything he can to help them. But not all people are willing to participate in the elections. One Palestinian woman was very pessimistic and said "neither I nor my husband want to participate."

One young woman even planned to register her dissatisfaction by voting a blank ticket. She said, "most of the candidates are running for their own benefit. They only want to gain prestige."

Some parties have even refused to participate in the elections through a boycott, led by the Islamic Action Front. But even Muslims have different views and opinions. While one stated that it is haram to participate in the elections, the majority of his compatriots disagree, also on religious grounds.

When asked how they feel about the elections' boycott, most people were of the opinion that it is not a good idea and does nothing to help the democratic process.

However, a group of people polled had mixed opinions.

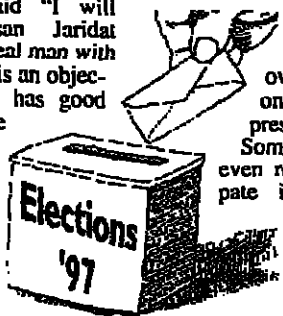
Mr Al Ashkar was very optimistic, saying, "the elections are a very good process and a right for every citizen. We should elect people so that they become good representatives in parliament. The parliament should put national and citizens' interests above all interests."

Another woman said, "It is a good process and everyone gives their opinion. We have the freedom of expression and opinion."

When asked if he believes the elections are unbiased, Mr. Abu Salem said, "The elections are very good and fair. They are free and uncorrupted."

However, not all were so pleased with the Jordanian democratic process. One doctor and owner of a medical laboratory said, "the elections are a good process but democracy is not really mature in this country. Others were pessimistic. A farmer and owner of a produce trading company said, "the elections only benefit the government not the people."

Although opinions are mixed about the democratic process in Jordan, it should be noted that it is fortunate that Jordan can hold safe, unbiased elections without the instability and violence that other countries suffer as they evolve to democracy.



Workshop voices concern for press

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of Human Rights which stipulates that "everyone has the right to freedom of opinion without interference and to seek, receive and impart information and ideas through any media and regardless of frontiers."

"We look at Jordan and see it as a country in a leadership position in terms of openness, tolerance and press freedom comparing it to the countries in the region," says Mr. Malcolm Smart, deputy director of Article 19.

"But yet, we think there are things to be done to reach the meaning of the freedom of the press, particularly since the amendments on the Press and Publication Law of May, which we consider as a serious step backwards."

Mr. Smart continues "these amendments reduced the range of newspapers and the com-

ments in them, and led to a situation where the government has a press which just echoes what its government wants it to say, and this isn't wise even to the government because its good to hear what the people say, and the mass media is the best vehicle for that."

But why hold such a seminar in the first place. The answer is that these discussions do provoke a dialogue. The answer was aptly put by Mr. Mahmoud El-Sherif, Editor-in-chief of Ad Dustour daily. "We hope that this dialogue will help the next parliament to take the good decision to discuss the press law."

Mr. El-Sherif, a former information minister, adds that "the most important thing in this seminar is that Jordanian journalists and officials will hear what others from the external world say about our journalistic performance, and

will be able to express their opinions neutrally, either to the newspapers or with the government."

The topics of the sessions were various, the first provided an evaluation and performance of the press since the beginning of the democratic process in Jordan since 1989.

"There was freedom of press and media in Jordan but after the [press] amendments the situation deteriorated and I think, although there isn't official censorship in Jordan, there is a clandestine censorship as we call it in Germany," says Mr. Marcel Pot, a German writer and journalist who covered the 1982 Israeli invasion of Lebanon. "People have scissors in their heads, automatically, they don't write on dangerous issues," adds the veteran journalist who covered the whole Middle East area.

Since the program said amphibious landing, the spectacular went on in the Azure sea and immediately behind our high vantage point, right on the fine white sand dunes in between the Bedouins denuded fig trees. Supplementing the distributed handouts and media kits, were several military experts on hand providing many of the answers and assessing the capabilities of these moving US weapons.

As Uncle Sam's guests we had the chance to chat up some of our American hosts during intermission. It turned out, many servicemen and women were enlisted or on reserve duty. One of them, a fireman from Chicago was contemplating a college education thanks to a loan from the army. The American military has a long-standing system, which enables enlisted cash-strapped youngsters to get a paid-for college education.

I ran into "An Officer and a Lady" variant—an engaging and attractive mother of two who when off duty was a lab technician. I also met an army public affairs captain who was a journalist. He had met Tom Clancy and was hoping to write a movie script of his own.

Whether officers or privates, our non-combat hosts were immaculately groomed. None of that greasy Desert Warriors stuff. I find it difficult to call their uniforms battle fatigues.

Air France increases flights to Amman as of next April

LAST 2 OCTOBER, an agreement was signed between the Jordan Civil Aviation Authority and the French Civil Aviation Authority at the International Conference Center in Paris. This agreement stipulates that both National Carrier will operate four flights weekly between Amman and Paris starting from 1 April, 1998.

Air France will operate four direct flights as of that date between Amman and Paris instead of three flights presently via Damascus.

Air France will increase its seat capacity by 150 percent to Jordan. This will answer the increasing demand in both the fields of tourism and business.

Karak tribes back their official candidates in the race to Parliament

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official. The three candidates now have a greater chance to reach the Lower House since members of each tribe have made an oath to back the official candidate of the tribe.

On the other hand, Al Majali tribe, one of the most influential in the Karak area, was not able to agree on one man, although it had originally fielded an official candidate. Two months ago representatives of all families of Al Majali tribe voted for Abdel Hadi Al Majali, who won 223 out of 270 votes. The former deputy is the brother of the current prime minister and is general-secretary of the center-right National Constitutional Party (INCP).

But it is not smooth sailing for Abdel Hadi Al Majali, who in recent days fell victim to a negative campaign against him. Several NCP officials in Amman believe the attack on Abdel Hadi Al Majali will hurt his re-election bid.

Running against him from the same tribe are three members, who refused to accept majority decision. Amjad Al Majali, a former official at the Royal Court and eldest son of former premier Hazza'a Al Majali, who was assassinated in 1961, rejected his tribe's ruling and asked that an earlier agreement to give him the tribe's candidacy be respected.

Running his campaign from the town of Al Rabba near Karak city, Amjad appears to have secured the backing of smaller tribes.

In addition, journalist Rakan Al Majali and blind poet Majid Al Majali are also running.

Majid Al Majali has been accused by traditional heads of Al Majali tribe of being pushed to the race by some Amman-based opposition figures to combat Abdel Hadi Al Majali. But he denies such accusations.

Back in Karak city, the race

takes a different angle. A simple three storey building, where the screams of children are heard, is the headquarters of Hafitha Al Ma'ita, or Hajeh Hafitha as her supporters call her. Clad in traditional clothing of the area, her face tattooed, the 58-year-old illiterate candidate is running as an independent. Her slogan is simple: "No I will not live in Abdoun," in reference to the posh Amman neighborhood. She says she doesn't care if she wins or loses. Her point is show that poor people have a voice too.

But Hajeh Hafitha does not enjoy her tribe's support. She is running against a strong competitor, Mousa Al Ma'ita, secretary general of the Arab Progressive Ba'ath Party.

Karak's downtown reflects the banner war that is going on. All talk about a better Jordan, a future Jordan, carrying the voice of the people and other promises. Everybody is running in Karak. Even the Islamists.

A former Muslim Brotherhood member, Majid Al Qarali, who opposed the boycott decision of the movement, is contesting the election as an independent Islamist. His slogans center on fighting the

Zionist enemy and following the scriptures. Next to his banners hang those belonging to Abdel Karim Al Qatwneh of the Arab Socialist Ba'ath Party, which is active in Karak.

However, the two pan-Arabist Ba'ath parties are historically based in Karak, a number of Ba'ath activists were arrested during the last year's bread riots, for allegation of inciting violence. However, the Islamist presence in Karak is almost negligible.

One independent Christian candidate is riding on a wave of popularity. Dr. Nazih Ammarin, a former deputy, says traditional leaders of his tribe have applied pressure on him to withdraw. But did not budge. He is bitter about the rise of the tribal influence in these elections. He says he does not want to be the candidate of the tribe because it will produce a weak parliament.

Dr. Ammarin is counting on the support of younger Karakis, who are breaking ranks with their tribe's traditional candidates. Smaller families, who believe that Amman is their ally during the bread protests, are also coming to his aid.

Article 19 lashes out at press law, calls for its repeal

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It also called on the government to abolish the minimum capital sum required for setting up a newspaper. Article 19 also called on the government to strip the Press and Publication Dept. of its censorship functions and to end practices aimed at intimidating journalists. It also asked that provisions in the Penal Code and the Press and Publication Law on defamation, innuendo and affront should be repealed.

The report gave a fairly comprehensive outline of Jordan's media structure and criticized mandatory membership by journalists to the Jordan Press Association (JPA), the government's control of radio and television and restrictions in the Press and Publications Law and other legislations.

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Many young Karakis, like Sa'ad, also feel let down by their traditional leaders who made it to Parliament before.

Samir, 31, has been unemployed for the past two years. He also took part in the bread riots. "By the time they [deputies] reach Amman, they cut their links with us and only remember Karak in the next elections," he says. "The problem is that traditional tribe leaders think that they still own our decision, which is not the case," he adds.

"We have matured. The bread uprising taught us a tough lesson. We found no one around us because our voices did not make it to Amman," Samir says.

One Mu'ta University student, introducing himself as Ahmad, says tribal heads know that they are losing control of the youth sector in the clans. "It is good to have a strong tribe, but it is bad to feel that you are only a vote in this tribe," he says.

Other young Karakis went even further in their challenge to their tribes. Ali, 24, lost his job after the bread riots although he says he was not involved. He and a group of friends representing different tribes in Wadi Al Karak visited former deputy Nazih Ammarin and convinced him to re-run in the coming elections.

Mr. Ammarin, contesting the Christian seat, was accused by the previous government of inciting Karakis to riot against the lifting of the bread subsidies last year. Many of those who were arrested during the riot were released after Ammarin's intervention. Ali says other Karak legislators did nothing.

He explains that when the tribe becomes dominated by a few with individual interests then "we have the right to look for our interests outside the tribe's domination."

A day with Bright Star in the Egyptian desert

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came towards us escorted by flying gunships and by a formation of fighter jets making large pyroettes in the blue sky above.

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To me these pressed garbs looked more like liveries tailored by the late Versace. As for those remarkable desert boots, they had to be from Gucci. Small wonder civilians as well as other non-US military personnel were gawking. I happen to know an American photographer who tried desperately to work out a swap. It didn't work.

Per chance I met an infantryman who was stationed in Hawaii. His singular responsibility was Rex and Ramin, two of Bright Star's sniffs. Although Rex was old and almost blind, he was the unit's prize explosives dog. The German Shepherd's task was to make sure no one had forgotten or misplaced a bomb in the VIP dais where most of the two, three and four star generals congregated. Ramin, on the other hand, was the narco canine on duty. "Now drink or smokin' allowed on camp!" clarified an army grunt.

The troops from a non-Nato participant were evidently slower than normal when it came to running and scrambling. Perhaps their gear was too heavy. Later I learned that in keeping with the Joneses, they had only just been issued with new battle dress and boots. Since these were not of the Gucci variety but more likely the cheaper Rhino skin or some other stiff element, the cockpoted servicemen had difficulty walking. Moreover, they had been warned that any tears to their new-sprung battle dress were deductible.

Early afternoon and we're on our way back to Cairo.

After a long morning under a bright vertical sun, the media welcomed the quiet drone of the air-conditioned bus. Seeking to impress his colleague, a veteran TV-journalist characterized the day's events as a glorified arms-expo when compared to his macho experience covering Somalia's prime time landing a few years ago. A debate ensued as other reporters drew on their respective teletext experience: Bosnia, Gulf War, South Lebanon.

Just as someone in the back of the bus was feeling sorry for CNN's Christiane Amanpour who makes a living reporting real time wargames, a young reporter tried to convince a multi zoom-lensed photographer there were two types of arms. The good news for Bright Star and other analogous pageants is that many countries still believe in conventional weapons: tanks, warships and planes. This is commendable for Western economies and provides a valid vehicle for selective redistribution of income in military-minded regimes. The bad news is that the next wars will be fought through modems. A software and high-tech information technology fair is worth several military exercises. This is why the next wargames must be held in Silicon Valley.

I made it back from the Pyramids to Maadi in 61 minutes. As usual Giza and Malek al-Saleh bridges were at a standstill. If only I owned one of them Bright Star amphibious vehicles!



Majid Al Majali
In Karak, the youngsters are answering a different call

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moving away from the control of their tribes. One such man is Majid Al Majali, a blind, fiery poet and a young opposition figure in his early thirties who is standing against his tribe's majority candidate, Abdel Hadi Al Majali, the strong man of Karak (see related story).

Majid Al Majali, who mostly campaigning in Amman among the Karaki students, he found strong support from fellow tribesmen.

He registered his name as a candidate in the last minute to contest the same seat that his stronger rival, Abdel Hadi Al Majali, is contesting in the Qaser district, where most of the Majalis live.

However, Majid believes that he will not affect Abdel Hadi's constituency. "My voters are his are world's apart," he says. "I know that my race will be difficult, but my goal is not to win or lose—it is to present a civilized model of elections."

Majid's father, Abdel Salam, rejected his son's challenge, because he had departed from the tribe's majority ruling. He told his son that his vote will go to the "Basha," referring to Abdel Hadi Al Majali.

Majid has no campaign headquarters in Karak; but several young Karakis in Al Qaser said friends of the famous poet came from Amman for the day to distribute banners and pictures of Majid.

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One Mu'ta University student, introducing himself as Ahmad, says tribal heads know that they are losing control of the youth sector in the clans. "It is good to have a strong tribe, but it is bad to feel that you are only a vote in this tribe," he says.

Other young Karakis went even further in their challenge to their tribes. Ali, 24, lost his job after the bread riots although he says he was not involved. He and a group of friends representing different tribes in Wadi Al Karak visited former deputy Nazih Ammarin and convinced him to re-run in the coming elections.

Mr. Ammarin, contesting the Christian seat, was accused by the previous government of inciting Karakis to riot against the lifting of the bread subsidies last year. Many of those who were arrested during the riot were released after Ammarin's intervention. Ali says other Karak legislators did nothing.

He explains that when the tribe becomes dominated by a few with individual interests then "we have the right to look for our interests outside the tribe's domination."

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Hannover Boy's Choir performs in Amman

ON THURSDAY 30 October, the National Music Conservatory presents a major concert featuring the 70 singers of the Hannover Boy's Choir with the Orchestra of the NMC under the baton of professor Heinz Hennig. This wonderful amalgamation of musicians and singers will present a memorable evening of German folk songs, famous vocal pieces with music by Bach and Schubert and two Jordanian songs, Badru Tamara and the popular, Ya Hala Biddeh.

On Saturday 1 November, the Choir and the Orchestra will present another unique performance especially designed to school students. The performance aims at providing cultural opportunities for Jordanian students which might in turn entice schools to form choir groups of their own. It also provides the modal formation of a choir to be followed by schools which already encompass choirs.

The secret of the Hannover Boy's Choir success stems from diligence and the awareness that music-making is not just an occupation like any other but is concerned with the practice of art, and not least in a belief in the power of the music itself. This secret of success has held good for 46 years, and it will do so in the future.

Hannover Boy's Choir was founded in 1950 by its conductor Heinz Hennig, then 23 years old.

JORDAN

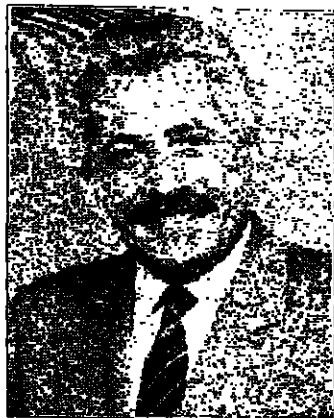
W E E K



An unconventional report on Jordanian news and views edited by Marwan Al Asmar

Beltaji blames Netanyahu for flagging tourism

Minister of Tourism Aqel Beltaji is angry. Speaking to Reuters, he blamed the flagging tourism figures in the region due to the election of Israeli Prime Minister Benjamin Netanyahu. He pointed out that the change of government in Israel negatively affected every single country in the region, adding that Israel was affected most. He said that Jordan anticipated an 8 percent to 10 percent increase in the number of tourists for this year, however, the figure was down to 2.5 percent. According to Beltaji most of these tourists came from the Gulf countries, but suggested 11 percent of tourists came from Israel.



Beltaji

Drugs seized

The anti-drugs squad has managed to seize yet another narcotics shipment coming through the border. One of the smugglers is said to be one of the sons of one of the candidates standing for the November elections. Col Sharmaydeh said the shipment was on one of the trucks that was coming in from Lebanon. The squad followed the truck to a farm in the Jordan Valley, and after a thorough search they found five and a half kilograms of heroin. Four men were apprehended and will face charges. So far this month a kilogram of opium, 75 kilograms of hashish and 300 Captagon tablets were uncovered. But the issue has received wide media attention. After investigations, it became apparent that the son of Khalil Haddadin is allegedly involved in the latest drugs shipment. But the issue is taking a political dimension. Opposition leaders are saying why publicize the issue now, at a point when Jordan is on the eve of the elections. They add its clearly a deliberate move to discredit Haddadin who is fighting for re-elections in the Amman's Third District. This was rejected by Dr Mazen Al Armouti, the government spokesman for electoral affairs, who says that this is a legal issue and not related to the elections.

Shoot out in Zeezya

Two people were killed and one injured after a quarrel in Zeezya, a town south of Amman. A number of people began shooting at each other in an argument over the search for gold in the area.

Elections' cards: Taken and returned

It's the elections again. A number of candidates standing for elections in the different electoral districts in the Amman Governorate were taken to the public prosecutor. They were said to have taken away the elections' cards of some of the voters as a means of pressure on elections day. After questioning, the elections cards were returned to the voters.

Health dispute settled

The 10-day dispute which erupted between the Ministry of Health and three professional associations—doctors, dentists and pharmacists has been finally settled. Ministry officials promised that they would yield to their demands. Members of these associations took strike action at 41 hospitals and 429 health centers around the country. At the heart of the dispute involved incentives and allowances demanded by public health sector employees. Associations' officials have already said that they don't want to escalate the dispute and stressed the need for a positive dialogue with the ministry.



Yemeni President Ali Abdallah Saleh is received by His Majesty King Hussein, Monday. Mr Saleh arrived to the Kingdom on a two-day visit from Egypt. Frank discussions took place between the two leaders. Speaking on the third anniversary of the Jordan-Israeli peace treaty, King Hussein said that the atmosphere that prevails around the peace process is not what it was when it was signed on 26 October 1994. He said that at the beginning stages he was very encouraged and full of hope that the treaty will be part of a wide effort for the Palestinians to achieve their rights on their national soil. In a response to a question at a joint press conference, he said that "I believe that there is a large group in Israel that is still committed to reach peace..." President Saleh said that the Mossad's attempt to assassinate Hamas leader Khalid Misha'i was a clear proof of Israeli terrorism.

Zerqa

The dark horse in the elections

By Marwan Asmar
Star Staff Writer

ZERQA—In previous elections campaigns, the Zerqa District was reputed to be one of the most hotly contested governorates in the country. What is distinctive about Zerqa is that it combined strong political forces of Islamists, leftists and tribal candidates. With a population of over 600,000, Zerqa is the second biggest constituency after Amman, with a total of 242,198 registered voters.

Despite the boycott, led by the Islamists and some leftists and nationalist opposition, Zerqa has not lost the panache. Forty candidates are standing for the six-seat constituency to be divided among four Muslims, a Christian and a Circassian/Chechen.

On the outside, everything looks normal. Candidates are gearing up for what promises to be a hot elections. But the boycott decision has given hope to many independent candidates to make it to the next Parliament.

But all indications point to a growing apathy among voters. Many have failed to collect

their voting cards, while others don't even know where polling stations are situated.

Campaigners, however, are keeping their fingers crossed, hoping that voters will make a turn out in the end. But one campaign manager, Quis Al Bayari, in Al Russeifeh was more forthright.

He says that there is a general mood of dissatisfaction among voters, adding that there are so many factors that are accounting for this. One is the Islamic boycott, but another is people's indifference to the elections and their impact on their lives. People in his area are busy making ends meet, and dealing with spiralling costs of living. Contrary to logic, he adds, these things have made people slowly move away from politics.

But despite this, the haul is still going on and deputies or former deputies still believe that there is a chance to mobilize voters. Mansour Seif Al Din Murad is fighting for the Circassian/Chechen seat. Although he lost his seat in the 1993 elections, this year he is making what appears to be a great comeback, according to his elections' manager in Russeifeh.

But there are two things to remember about this candidate: This is the first time he makes a pitch for this district and secondly, he is facing one of the most astute politicians in this neck of the woods. Sheikh Abdel Baqi Gamoh has served as a politician for a great number of years and is well known

and respected among his Chechen community.

But Murad's campaign manager dismissed this point out of hand. He said Murad, who is also from Zerqa, is a well known and respected figure. An additional thorn that could stand against Murad won a seat in Amman's Third District in the 1989 elections.

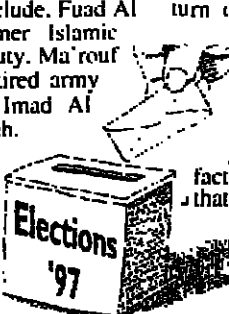
Because of his past political experience, Murad is liked and respected among the Palestinians who could give him their support, but that again depends on one condition: A high voter turnout on elections day.

In addition to Gamoh and Murad, others are fighting for the same seat, including Mohammad Taha Arslan, Abed Al Jalil Abu Baker Al Chechani, Ahmed Musa Al Chechani and Yousef Kheir Al Din Chechani.

But elections wouldn't be complete without the Christian seat. Three candidates are in line: Former deputy Bassam Haddadin, Mohammad Al Yousef Al Qsous and Jamil Qandah who put his name down to run for the elections at the last minute.

The general mood is that there will be a tough fight for this seat. It is argued that Haddadin, who is seeking re-elections, will face two tough contenders, and at the very least they will take away some of his voters.

However, his election manager in Al Russeifeh says that he stands a very good chance of re-election because of his work as a constituency deputy in the last Lower House.



Toujan Faisal

The 'Iron Lady' is not giving up yet

By a Star Staff Writer

SHE is seen as a home-grown Jordanian phenomenon, a woman you either like or hate—no middle ground. She is said to scream at her political opponents, who would shy away to avoid her wrath. However, there are times, when her male counterparts, blowing full steam ahead, would take her on like the time when deputy Jamal Al Khureisha threw an ashtray at her.

Dubbed as the 'iron lady of Jordan' by many of her foes, she brought vigor to the Lower House of Parliament. Her enemies secretly envied her for her fiery character and hot temper as she got up to make speech after speech under the dome. Toujan Faisal glitters when she speaks. She would put her point of view very forcefully with cool logic, and regardless of the consequences. With just a little short of abrasiveness, the former media personality-turned-politician would harp on to prove the justice of her point of view.

The first woman deputy, elected to the Lower House in the last 1993 elections, is a tough fighter who does not mince her words. In the last parliament, she brought her own special brand of politics to the dome, in defiance of the prevailing agenda. Many times, she had risen to the occasion and sought to practice her full rights as a deputy politician.

Taking the bull by the horn so to speak, she proved to be an eloquent speaker, challenging the government on every single issue, at least the ones which she thought were against national interest.



contrary, she thinks of herself as a national politician, with national aims and aspirations. Faisal is a "passionate politician" who believes in the ultimate right of the Jordanian and Arab people.

That passion was reflected in her fiery character. But it was not all emotion. She also offered a certain rationale, and by working with other members of the opposition, even with those whom she disagreed with many times, she was able to leave her mark on the 12th Parliament.

From the start she made it clear that she meant business. She set the tone, giving the first Majali government, back in 1993 the thumbs down. She accused his government of coming in to make peace with the Israelis.

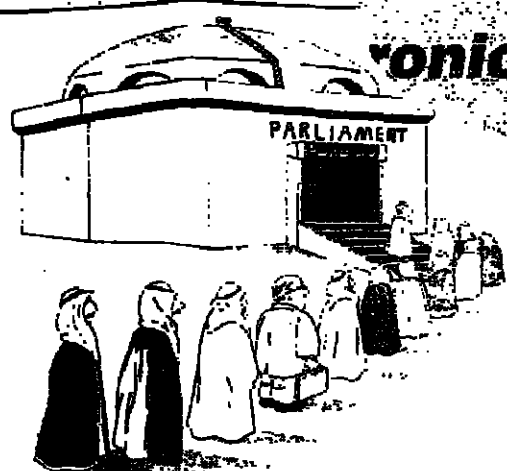
She remained a fervent anti-normalizer, speaking strongly against the peace treaty that Jordan had signed with Israel at the end of 1994.

As a member of an elected house of Parliament, she believed strongly that deputies must have greater power in the national issues that affect the nation.

Although she is considered to be on the left of center, frequently siding with Islamist and nationalist politicians in the last Lower House, she refused to adhere to the boycott of the coming elections, which the Islamists had called for. She said that "even one voice" that represents the alternative in the next Lower House will make a difference.

However, for the present, she needs to get over the next hurdle and get re-elected. Political pundits say her race will be tough, but the iron lady is not giving up.

Polling



Three women candidates have been banned from holding a public debate in Amman's Fifth District. Laila Faisal, Heyam Kalimat and Fardous Al Masri were refused permission by the Amman Governorate officials from organizing meetings and debates with the voters in the area.

An election campaign with a touch of garlic. At the start many received multiple voting cards, by mistakes. The Ministry of Interior acted and withdrew all the multiple ones. However, by the latest hour, it seems that the electorate, here and there, do continue to receive the multiple phenomenon. One man in Amman's First District said that he received 11 voting cards. However, his family only has six members who were allowed to vote. Another has received two, another has received three and the last just keeps going on and on, but we are continually being assured that the Ministry is doing something about it.

Police have managed to catch two elections' culprits forging voting cards in favor of one of the candidates for Amman's Fourth District. About 9468 voters' cards were in the process of being duplicated at one of the commercial printers in Amman. Right at the start of the election campaign a similar find was unveiled. More than 1500 forged voting cards were identified in the Mejd-Bedoun Constituency.

It's election fever. The number of candidates standing for the November election is stabilizing at 542 having gone down all the way from 561. The number of voting centers in the country is 1373 that have 3689 ballot boxes. There are 1075 counting committees.

According to a latest poll, 66.7 percent will exercise their right to vote in the next elections. The poll of 2811 people conducted by the Center of Jordanian Studies at Yarmouk University suggested that 27.1 percent will not take part in the elections. The poll found more women, 67.1 percent, are likely to vote, than men. This figure increased among illiterate women at 79.3 percent. Further to this, it was suggested that people with higher degrees are less likely to participate. The figure went down to as low as 49.4 percent. Also figures showed that people with higher income, that is between the JD 400 - JD 500 category are more likely to participate than otherwise. In the 1993 elections it was the people with JD 100 to JD 200 income brackets who participated most in the elections. The poll suggested that 91 percent of those interviewed didn't belong to any political parties, the number that did was only 7.4 percent. On the other hand, 70 percent of those polled suggested that parties don't satisfy the objectives of individuals as opposed to 13.2 percent. Lastly, the poll suggested that 84.6 percent said that the elections strengthen democracy whereas 11.4 percent said otherwise.

Ten years on, this elections' campaign could just be dubbed as the flying campaign, or could this be a little far-fetched. As of this week, the Ministry of Interior has allowed all prospective candidates to carry their elections' campaign right up into the air. Candidates can now rent hand gliders to put their message across. Officials at the Ministry say that the Elections Law does not ban the use of any kind of planes in the elections' campaign. But there is a procedure. Candidates must get a permission from the Ministry of Interior for a security clearance. The Hand Gliders Club said it is fully prepared to partake in the advertising campaign, however, it will cost candidates JD 650 per hour.

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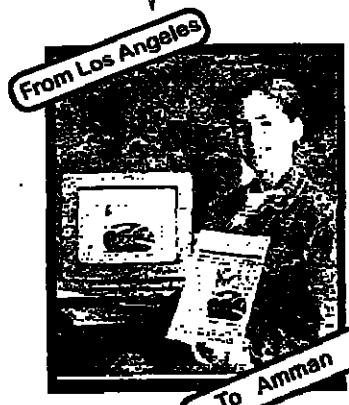
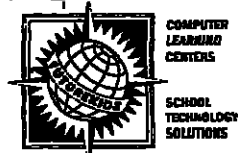
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(News item: Clinton's pledge to appoint a "special coordinator" to oversee American policy toward Tibet has brought protests from China, just before President Jiang Zemin's state visit to the United States.)

Our Say...

The press law again

A TWO-DAY seminar on media and press freedom in Jordan has focused attention again on the controversial amendments to the Press and Publication Law, imposed by the government in May. The seminar, organized by two local research centers in cooperation with Article 19, the International Centre Against Censorship, has discussed wide-ranging topics dealing with the state of the Jordanian media and freedom of expression.

The holding of the seminar coincided with the release this week of a report on the Jordanian press by Article 19, which criticized the temporary law and called for its repeal.

While the government's point of view was presented by the Deputy Prime Minister and the Director of Press and Publication Dept., it was clear that the official stand did not convince members of the Jordanian press and international experts attending the seminar.

The temporary law is accused of dealing a blow to freedom of the press and to the democratic process in Jordan. The law has already claimed 13 weekly newspapers and has curtailed editors' ability to carry out their duties and responsibilities.

The amendments were passed by the government in the absence of the Lower House and experts say they are filled with legal loopholes and articles that contradict the Constitution and other prevailing laws.

The temporary law has already been condemned by journalists, political parties, professional associations and independent figures in Jordan in addition to many local and international human rights organizations.

As a result one would have expected the government to review its position and offer ways to resolve the crisis, which is hurting Jordan's image worldwide. Instead, we were shocked to hear senior officials fiercely defending the law in total disregard to public opinion and criticism.

There is no doubt that certain excesses by the press, particularly the weekly newspapers, have contributed to the government's decision to carry out the controversial amendments. But the temporary law has gone beyond the treatment of these excesses and has gravely threatened the freedom of press in the country. It also consolidated government's control of the press by maintaining its ownership in the two major dailies.

The government has overridden the legislature and the press community in its re-drafting of one of the most important public liberties laws in the land. What we wanted to hear was not a blind defense of the law but a promise to work closely with the press body and the future Lower House to redress the imbalances and maintain Jordan's commitment to democracy and people's Constitutional right to freedom of expression.

There is no doubt, and regardless of what the government says, that the temporary law has dealt a severe blow to press freedom and created doubts about the future of the democratization process. What is needed is not defensive posturing, but an honest desire to review the impact of the amendments and work together to produce a new law that maintains public interest while safeguarding press freedom.

Olive picking

● An elderly lady from Beit Hanana, near Jerusalem is busy collecting olives. Hundreds of people in Jordan and the West Bank and Gaza are involved in the olive harvesting season.



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Notes from the Levant

Riad Al Rayyess: A never tiring warrior against the Arab censor

By Osama El-Sherif

FEW IN the Arab world will probably mourn the closure, this month, of Al Kashkool Arabic bookshop in the heart of London's trendy Knightsbridge district. But Arab intellectuals will scuse the vacuum left by the bookstore whose controversial titles that are banned in the Arab world. Al Kashkool became a cultural oasis in an arid literary landscape, where freedom of expression and moral courage transcended the obnoxious red lines drawn by Arab censors and their merciless scissiors.

While for most Arabs London is the capital of shopping and good times, for the threatened breed of liberal Arab thinkers it is a cultural refuge: a haven away from the blunt authority of censors and disinformation organs of the state. One man has led the way, and by his rejection of official custody over the truth, Riad Najib Al Rayyess found himself in self-imposed exile in London in the mid-1970s. He was one of thousands of Arab thinkers, writers and journalists who were chased away by the Lebanese civil war. He is a strange mixture of all three.

The Syrian-born Al Rayyess belongs to a minority of Arab intellectuals. He is a suborn, some call him romantic, believer in the dream and promise of Arab nationalism. His intellectual aspirations found home in the liberal and influential *An Nahar* Arabic daily, where he became a roving senior correspondent for the Beirut paper

traveling all over the world and covering some of the most important events in the 1960s and 70s.

Lebanon's embrace of intellectual freedom influenced him in such a way that Al Rayyess promised himself never to live under authoritarian rule.

When he drifted to London he quickly set off on one of his many literary projects beginning with the publication of *Al Muntar* weekly newspaper, one of the first Arabic titles to be published in the diaspora. This is when Al Rayyess found himself on a collision course with what would become his life-long nemesis: the Arab censor.

Al Muntar's experience was short-lived. But the pioneering spirit of Al Rayyess was not. He launched a number of smaller publishing projects until he found himself face to face with his biggest challenge: to start an Arab book publishing house in London.

He was no ordinary publisher. Years of countless, and often fruitless, confrontations with Arab censors have only hardened his resolve. Al Rayyess Books embraced a generation of rebellious Arab writers, poets and thinkers like Al Saadeq Al Nayhoum and Youssef Al Khalil to name a few. A banned or persecuted writer would be welcomed with open arms by Al Rayyess in his Russell Square office. He published hundreds of titles covering controversial Arab political, social, historical and literary issues. While few books were allowed into some Arab countries, many were not even the titles that were ordered directly

from the publisher were confiscated by the Arab censor.

Then, Al Rayyess made yet another gamble. He published a monthly literary magazine, *Al Naqid* (The Critic), which again was banned from most Arab countries. He was not about to strike a truce with his opponents and *Al Naqid* thrived on controversy and taboos, from the state of Arab women to official censorship to cultural persecution. Al Rayyess became the anti-thesis of the Arab censor and the mentality that created him. The magazine was frequently confiscated, banned, and eventually Al Rayyess had to close it.

But the cigar-smoking sarcastic publisher was not about to give up. If he can't send his books to Arab countries, then his readers can come to London to buy them. Thus he started Al Kashkool and for a while, Al Rayyess seemed to have had his day against the Arab censor.

Meanwhile, he remained the quintessential reporter, sniffing for stories and following a lead to the end of the world.

He traveled to the Central Asian Republics, emerging from decades of Soviet hegemony, to write about the forgotten Muslim world and later traced Islam's historical and cultural foray into the Horn of Africa. Both riveting accounts



Al Rayyess

were later published in books.

The end of Lebanon's civil war renewed his hopes of returning to the Arab world. But Al Rayyess could not find solace in the new Lebanon that was emerging. Once again he was under the authority of the official censor and when he refused to compromise, his books were confiscated yet again.

Does the closure of Al Kashkool in London mean that Al Rayyess has finally lost his decades-old war against the ubiquitous censor? He never claimed to be a businessman and his failed ventures may not vouch for him among frustrated investors, but for Arab intellectuals who found refuge in his publications and lonely London bookstore, the romantic Al Rayyess is not unlike the mythical phoenix.

State-sponsored assassination is a tricky, unpredictable business...

By Eric Margolis

Israel's botched attempt to assassinate an official of the Palestinian Hamas movement on 25 September in Amman, has changed the landscape, brought worldwide condemnation down Israel, and shows dramatically why state-sponsored murder is best avoided.

Assassination is always a tricky, dangerously unpredictable, business that's best avoided. So concluded the best minds in US intelligence a decade ago. Israel's floundering prime minister, Benjamin Netanyahu, has just learned this important lesson.

You don't send out assassins without first asking, "What happens if the attempt fails?" Mossad is probably the world's ablest intelligence service.

Even so, some operations are bound by the law of averages to go awry.

The attack on Khalid Misha'1 by five Israeli agents disguised as Canadian tourists looked like a rushed mission mounted without Mossad's usual meticulous preparation, suggesting someone high-up ordered an immediate hit.

Why was a not-so-important Hamas political official targeted?

The Israeli press says Misha'1 was not even involved in previous Hamas bombings. Why not go after hardcore Hamas bombers instead?

One easily sympathizes with the Israeli government's desire to take drastic action to counter terrorism. Israel has been shocked and terrified by Hamas suicide bombers blowing up Jewish civilians. The public demanded action.

But what would killing Misha'1 have accomplished? His murder would certainly have triggered new Hamas bombings.

Had the Mossad assassins gotten away with killing Misha'1—by using an unknown poison injected into his ear that apparently left no trace—who would have known of Israel's revenge?

How many other Mideast figures have been killed by Mossad's invisible venom? If Yasser Arafat dies of natural causes, will Israel be blamed—and bombed—anyway?

As a democracy, civilized society and military superpower, Israel should not be running a Mideast version of Murder Inc. To see how wrong this policy is, put the shoe on the other foot.

Last year, a UN investigation found Israel specifically shelled the Qana refugee camp in south Lebanon, which was packed with families of Hezbollah guerrillas.

Over 100 Lebanese civilians, women and children, were killed. They died as surely and bloodily from Israeli 155 mm shells as did Jews from napalm-packed Hamas bombs.

Does Lebanon's government have the right under Israel's eye-for-an-eye policy to send hit teams to kill Israeli generals and officials who authorized the Qana attack? Can Palestinians go after Israeli officers who used anti-personnel cluster bombs and napalm against refugee camps?

Can Lebanon rightfully assassinate Israel's Gen. Ariel Sharon, who, in 1982, ordered the invasion of Lebanon and massive shelling of Beirut that killed 15,700 Lebanese civilians?

Two days before attempting to kill Misha'1, Israel reportedly received a message from Hamas offering a 10-year ceasefire in exchange for Israeli withdrawal from the West Bank and ending Jewish settlements. Netanyahu claims he only got this exceptionally important message after the botched assassination.

His supporters blame Mossad chief Danny Yatom for sitting on the message. Yatom denies it. This is part of a furious battle of leaks raging between Mossad and Netanyahu's cabinet.

Some Netanyahu supporters claim the Mossad hit was a rogue operation never authorized by the prime minister.

Mossad partisans leak back that it was all Netanyahu's hair-brained (sic) idea—and that he's now trying to make Mossad chief Yatom fall guy for the fiasco.

Other critics say a headline cabal inside Mossad is determined to thwart any peace with Palestinians—which is likely true.

All this finger-pointing looks like the beginning of a second Lavon Affair.

In 1954-55, Israel sought to sabotage warming relations between the US and Nasser's Egypt. Israeli intelligence recruited Egyptian Jews and ordered them to plant bombs in US libraries and cinemas showing American films.

The agents were caught and hanged. A huge scandal erupted in Israel. The government claimed it was a rogue operation run by defence minister Pinhas Lavon. He insisted it was ordered by the government. Lavon was sacked. To this day, the affair remains shrouded in mystery.

Debate over the Amman fiasco will probably rage for years.

Meanwhile, the failed plot has ignited a train of strange events.

To divert blame from Israel, a former Canadian ambassador

to Israel endangered his countrymen's lives by suggesting Canada was involved in the plot.

In another bizarre twist, while publicly ordering Arafat to keep arresting Hamas members, Netanyahu freed from prison Hamas founder Sheikh Yassin, and 70 other Hamas "terrorists" in order to get his would-be assassins back from Jordanian custody.

Palestinians, enraged by Netanyahu's crude sabotage of the peace process and economic punishments, see the increasing unpopularity of Arafat as an American-Israeli stooge.

Half now support Hamas. Netanyahu's blunders have suddenly transformed Hamas into a major, even legitimate political player. Small wonder Netanyahu and Arafat have resumed talks.

They've been scared into each other's unloving arms by a surging Hamas.

A horrified Netanyahu may even find he's created a sort of Palestinian Khomenei—a nice irony, since Israel help found Hamas in the 1980s to rival the PLO.

Netanyahu came to power by claiming he would give Israel security. What he's given, so far, is a deepening mess and the threat of much more bloodshed.

What can be an important topic for Israeli society, may not be given the same value judgement by us, therefore, to attempt imitating what the Israelis do, without taking into consideration the issues important for our society, would be an unintelligent approach to an issue that requires plenty of intelligence.

The divisions in Israeli society, between western and Eastern roots, is usually veiled under party politics, and ideological concerns, when in effect, the issue is of a crucial social dimension that touches the core of Israeli society. Here again, we hardly get to know about the critical nature of this issue outside what is published in academic journals and scientific publications.

Any Israeli journalist is capable of tackling these issues, and one is certain that they are important for the Israeli public, and the world at large, but, the imaginary line of "sacred cows" is maintained, and the notion of implicit patriotism is unquestioned.

There is no point in imposing what is journalistically interesting for us, as the common norm that interests everyone, without understanding the notions of patriotism and its subtlety in democratic societies.

Letters to the Editor

Who has a tough race?

To The Editor,

Your story (The Star 23 October) which dealt with female candidates having a tough race to the Dome, is simply misleading and has the scent of bias against some women candidates. The writer, Mr Raed Al Abed should know better why he wrote that story in that fashion, but we would like to tell where Mr Al Abed went wrong.

Women groups fail to support Ms Toujan Faisal, the outspoken deputy, he says. Of course they do. But the reason for that failure, the writer choose not to discuss. First, in addition to Ms Faisal's candidacy to parliament this time, there are other 16 women candidates; Ms Faisal's outstanding performance in the previous parliament is but one main factor behind this show up of political activism on the part of women in this country. She was a model of a serious and dedicated deputy who knows her trade well. The other 16 women candidates have the right to feel that they, also, can defend their rights and

convictions and perform as well, may be better, than Ms Faisal.

Since there are other 16 women candidates in the race, it goes without saying that women groups' votes will be dispersed among those candidates, simply because women have different views and opinions about those candidates. Ms Faisal never claimed that she was the undisputed candidate of women. On the contrary she was consistent in her call for not dealing with the issue of woman's participation in Parliament on a quota basis. That idea would put women's issues in a certain category as if "they" were of a different kind or species of human beings! Men and women alike should stand on equal footing when it comes to electing or being elected. Ms Faisal does not want to depend on women's votes, only to be in the parliament and there lies the big misreading of Mr Al Abed.

As far as the 17 women candidates are facing a tough competition from male candidates on the basis of sheer num-

bers of candidates (31 to 1), the writer should be reminded that in the last elections 1993, there were three courageous women candidates running against nearly 600 male candidates, and the outcome was that one third of those women candidates made it to the parliament! This time you have more than five times and plus of women candidates running against 544 male candidates. By simple calculation women this time have the upper hand in being elected comparatively speaking, and the record will be beaten once again!

Finally, should someone need an indication on who is afraid of who, and who is nervous over women's candidacy and political activism, the flagrant intimidation of a woman candidate, with the name of Wissaf Ka'abneh, in the central region of the country by shooting at her with live ammunition, could be a fine case study, on who is having a tough race to the Dome!

Jihan Al Hayek and Salim Ayoub

Israeli press

THE ISRAELI press, like any other mass medium in the world has detractors and admirers. However, there is usually a consensus around the opinion that, as an information organ, it can be more adventurous than many other publications to the region.

The issue here is not that there should be competition in the region over the "adventurism" of the press, but rather in providing accurate information and responsible coverage. We often hear about the lateral freedom of the Israeli newspapers, and their reports on political dissent in the country and issues related to war, peace, and state security.

We even hear voices in Jordan, and in the neighboring Arab and Islamic countries, that the freedom of the press is curtailed, and that we should take notice of what the press can do and achieve in Israel. Such grudging admiration does not take into account the subtleties of the Israeli press organs, and the themes that they work on, albeit on many occasions they tend to be thorny. But they do not have the same important consideration in the Israeli public consciousness, as they may in the Arab and Islamic worlds.

The historical, social and cultural developments have played an important role in the shaping of the information services, and the sensitive issues which can be approached under various political set-ups in Israel as well as the Arab and Islamic worlds.

Therefore, before we jump into imitation and demands, we should understand that there are sacred cows for the Israeli press as well.

Rarely anything of substance is mentioned in the Israeli press, when it comes to issues that touch upon the fabric of Israeli society. Although plenty of sensationalism and information of variable value gets printed. Yet, anything that may reflect a negative image about Israeli society abroad, is usually shunned and avoided.

Such information, usually filters through the foreign press, or through the various academic studies conducted in conferences, and published in specialized publications. There is rarely, if ever, any detailed reports regarding the question of domestic violence in Israel, which is probably among the highest in the world.

One does not wish to give an opinion on how the Israeli press should behave, but there seems to be a common stand on this issue among the Israeli press moguls, to maintain the social dignity of Israel intact. Perhaps, this is an Israeli taboo subject that is usually left unperurbed in an expression of patriotism, one presumes.

What can be an important topic for Israeli society, may not be given the same value judgement by us, therefore, to attempt imitating what the Israelis do, without taking into consideration the issues important for our society, would be an unintelligent approach to an issue that requires plenty of intelligence.

Business scene

■ The Jordan New Cables Co., has generated profits estimated at JD 533,000 over the first half of this year. This is a rise of 63 percent compared with the same period last year. Pre-tax profits are JD 301,000.

The company's assets reached JD 11.27 million. Its net sales stood at JD 4.01 million, recording an increase of 104 percent for the same half last year. The company which was established in 1992, has a capital of JD7,991,300.

■ The cost of living for September increased, it rose by 12.9 points during the month, compared with 8.8 points in August, according to official statistics. Meat and chicken prices went down by 1.6 percent. The average rate of inflation for the first nine months was 2.3 percent, which is slightly higher compared with the 2.1 percent in the same period last year.

■ The overall traded bonds at the Amman Financial Market (AFM) during the first eight months of this year reached JD 1.72 million, according to latest statistics. Since early 1990s the bonds market has been exposed to a noticeable weakness due to the shortage of liquidity which is mainly directed to stock trading. Also investors, over the last three years, have come to prefer to deposit their money in banks seeking a fixed and warranted profit.

What also affects the weak performance of the bonds market is the lack of media and promotional strategy that guarantee institutional concerns and attracts individual investments. The bonds exchange includes development bonds, treasury bonds, treasury permits and loan bonds. Trading, since more than six years, is mainly limited to development bonds. However, the bonds' exchange in 1989 reached its peak, when trading in this kind of investments was about JD 221 million, representing one fourth of tradings since 1978. Bonds' issues at the primary market reached JD 302 million from 1978 till the end of last years.

■ Arab Wings, the Amman-based executive jet charter services company, has confirmed it will disclose details of a \$5 million three-year lease contract concluded with a multinational company in the Dubai international aerospace exhibition which will be held in November. "The contract is agreed but the signing will be carried out at Dubai 97 and full details will be announced then," Samir Bazzaz, director of marketing and sales, Arab Wings.

Foreign Exchange

Wednesday, 29 October

	Buy JD	Sell JD
US \$	0.7080	0.7100
£	1.1510	1.1568
DM	0.4124	0.4145
SFR	0.4801	0.4825
FF	0.1227	0.1233
YEN (100)	0.5624	0.5632
DKK	0.3667	0.3685
LYD (1000)	0.0419	0.0421

Private sector calls to boycott Israeli delegation in Doha

By Iham Sadeq
Star Staff Writer

AS THE countdown to the convening of the 4th Middle East and North Africa (MENA IV) economic event approaches, the participation in the venue remains the focus of much debate among economic experts.

So far only Jordan, Yemen and Oman have announced their participation. However, Saudi Arabia, Bahrain, Kuwait, Egypt and the United Arab Emirates are still making their attendance conditional on further positive steps in the peace process.

But press reports said that the Bahraini Chamber of Industry and Trade (BCIT), which represents the private sector, is boycotting the Doha conference. In any case BCIT has never participated in any of the three previous MENA summits.

Jordan has already said it will be attending. A delegation has already been named to represent the Kingdom.

Though there are three members who will represent the private sector in Jordan's delegation—Khalidoun Abu Hassan (president of Amman Chamber of Industry) and Haider Morad (president of Amman Chamber of Trade) and Wa'el Younan, president of the Contractors Association—the real stand of the private sector is still unknown, though, some say, it is seemingly in favor of the boycott.

Some moderate analysts argue that since an official dele-

gation representing Jordan to the venue has been already formed, it is important not to let the government down. Others back the participation stand for they are keen to avoid any damage in Jordan's ties with brotherly countries as the host country is Qatar which is a strong supporter of Jordan.

Despite normalization steps taken by some Arab countries, after the signing of the peace accords between Jordan and the Palestinians on one side and Israelis on the other, Qatar took a distinctly independent stance. She was among the first Arab countries to stop these steps and make the further improvement of ties with Israel conditional on pushing the peace process forward.

Some representatives from the private sector are calling for a tougher stand. Mr. Wassif Azer (vice president of the Amman Chamber of Industry), Mr. Riyadh Al Sayfi, the vice president of the Amman Chamber of Trade and economic analyst Dr. Munir Hamaneh urge Arab businessmen to boycott the Israeli delegation attending the Doha Conference, as a reaction to Israel's hardline policy.

Some of those experts see that the boycott decision as not a wise one, seeing attendance as a chance to promote Jordanian investment opportunities in the world. Others say that if the venue is convened, "then we have to boycott the Israeli delegation to send a message to the delegates that our participation has a political dimen-

sion," says Azer.

"It is imperative that Arab and Jordanian businessmen do their utmost to make Israel feel their strong protest against its anti-peace practices," he adds.

Other institutions from the private sector including the Chamber of Trade and Industry, the banking societies and businessmen are left free to choose either to send delegates to the conference or not.

"Till now, the board of the Amman Chamber of Trade has not taken any final decision to participate or not," says Al Sayfi.

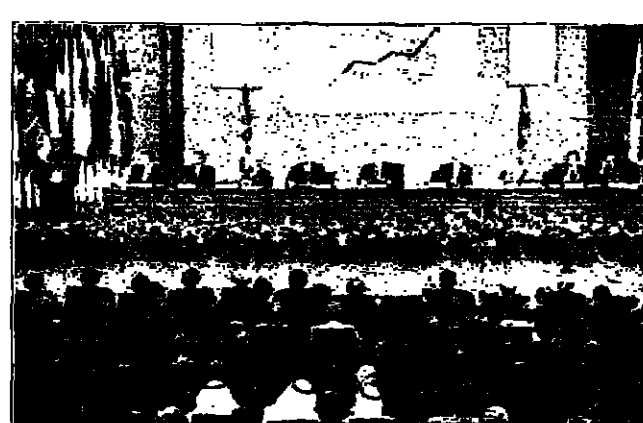
However, Dr. Hamaneh adopts a different view. "It is imperative to boycott the conference as a protest to Israeli practices, especially when Israel transferred its terrorist actions to Jordan," he says (pointing to the late assassination attempt on Hamas' leader Khaled Misha'i).

He elaborates that by experience, the economic dividends from our peace treaty with Israel are zero and such venues are exploited by Israel as a means to improve its image in the world.

"These conferences are but a prior reward for Israel for something that till now it did not commit itself to achieve," Dr. Hamaneh maintains.

But economic expert Dr. Fahed Al Fanek is enthusiastic for the venue and says there are many reasons why Jordan should attend the Doha conference. He disagrees with Dr. Hamaneh's description that attendance would be a reward to Israel.

"It is not important whether



At the end of the day, will the Doha venue resemble the Amman '95 economic summit or not an Israeli delegation will be present or absent. Its presence in itself is by no means a reward, which is definitely undeserved," he says.

What is important in Al Fanek's view is the role that the Israelis will be allowed to play in Doha and how they will be treated by other delegations.

In fact, he adds it will be a chance to let them feel the negative attitude towards them by the anti-peace policies under the leadership of Netanyahu. "Most likely they will feel the heat and understand the signals."

Dr. Al Fanek refers to other reasons such as keeping good ties with Qatar as a supporter of Jordan, and the fact that the Kingdom is currently dealing with Israeli officials directly on political, economic and security matters. "It does not make sense that we meet with Israeli delegations in

Amman and boycott them in Doha," he argues.

He says that Syria did not hesitate to attend the first and second Euro-Med conferences held in Barcelona and Malta (1996, 1997), both of which had active Israeli participation.

It is an agreed practice, Al Fanek says, that Arab states do not boycott international conferences just because Israel is there.

Concluding, Al Fanek says that the conference is sponsored by the United States, which will provide Jordan with substantial financial aid that ranges between \$170 million to \$250 million next year.

So, according to him "our absence will be seen as an anti-American gesture," but "we have much to gain if we attend and much to lose if we decline," Al Fanek maintains.

IATA holds meeting in Amman

AMMAN (Star)—More than 700 senior officials and dignitaries representing about 125 Arab, regional and international airlines are taking part in the 53rd general annual meeting of the International Air Transport Association (IATA) which will convene in Amman on 2-5 November, at Radisson Hotel (formerly Philadelphia Hotel).

The venue will be patronized by His Majesty King Hussein. The association's representative in Amman, Khalid Mahdi, the director of External Relations in the Middle East, Iran, Pakistan and Afghanistan says "Aviation plays a vital role in supporting the national economy of any country, that's why IATA

gives much concern to develop commercial aviation."

He adds that this is the first conference of IATA to convene in the Middle East and says that Amman was chosen to host this annual meeting because of peace and stability in the country as well as the Jordanians' hospitality to welcome people from all countries.

He describes the venue as a great event for the participating countries. He says the airlines taking part have an objective to improve the quality of services and reduce the cost to attract passengers.

For his part, Chairman of IATA's General Assembly for the current session, Nadir Al Thahabi says that the two-

day meeting will discuss various issues related to air transport industry, with concentration on aviation safety, training airline staff, competence and safety of carriers and other security measures related to these equipment on air and on land. Also such proposed measures are targeted at reducing the aeroplanes' accidents and to secure safer flights.

Al Thahabi, who is the Executive Director of Royal Jordanian points out that the IATA meeting will also tackle means of improving the quality of services provided for passengers and discusses the possibility of reducing operational costs on operating air-



Mahdi

lines world-wide. Alongside the meeting some tours are scheduled for partici-



Al Thahabi

pants to visit archaeological and touristic sites in Jordan such as Jerash and Petra.

IFC official praises Jordan for development growth

AMMAN (Star)—The economic forecast for Jordan is good, said the Executive Vice President of the International Finance Corporation (IFC) Mr. Januk Lindback. Since the early 1990s, Jordan has recorded impressive growth rates of over 6.5% on average. The atmosphere is conducive to the development of the private sector. It is also a good reason for me to be here now, he told a gathering of businessmen at the Amman Chamber of Commerce.

Since 1994, the IFC, which is a World Bank affiliate, has invested \$110.4 million in eight projects, of which \$90.4 million. "Our strategy is to focus on priority areas, including, tourism, industry, agribusiness, mineral resources and capital markets," he says.

In the tourism sector, which has tremendous potential, the

IFC recently approved investments in three tourism projects, including the first two hotel and spa complexes on the Dead Sea. Jordan's abundant phosphate and potash resources have been a principal factor in attracting foreign investment. IFC has invested \$30 million in Jordan's mineral resources in the past and will continue to seek opportunities to develop this sector.

In the area of capital markets, the IFC provided technical assistance and advisory services to improve the regulatory and legal framework for private sector development and prepared a feasibility study to provide sustainable financing for micro-enterprises. In addition, "we provided advisory services on developing the mortgage market," Mr. Lindback said.

In the area of technical assistance to the financial sector, the IFC has been working with the

World Bank on the regulatory framework for leasing companies. It is working on developing a new insurance law and the establishment of a life insurance company. "Finally, we will be working on developing a new mutual funds law, which will lead to the establishment of a mutual fund management company, which—in turn—could play a major role in mobilizing savings and channelling them into productive investments."

The corporation is working with local banks that need recapitalization and are looking at various instruments—such as GDRs, subordinated debt, etc.—to do this. "We are also discussing the establishment of an investment bank to attract foreign investors and provide much needed investment banking services."

IFC's current portfolio in Jordan amounts to \$86.3 million in six companies. In '97 Financial Year, IFC approved two projects.

The first project is the Business Tourism Company involving the development of a \$25 million 230-room hotel and health care facility on the eastern shores of the Dead Sea. It is one of the first international standard hotels to be built on the Jordanian side of the Dead Sea and IFC's second hotel in the area. This pioneering hotel-cum-wellness resort—capitalizing on the unique therapeutic properties of the Dead Sea—will help diversify tourism activity in the region by contributing towards the development of a new tourist destination and by attracting the growing international health tourism market. Besides generating foreign exchange and creating jobs, IFC's investment will act as a catalyst and give confidence to future investors and developers in this under-developed area.

An important consideration for this project was the high environmental standards followed by the Business Tourism Company—these standards are expected to set a precedent for other hotel developments in the area. This is critical for the Dead Sea where issues of water pollution, coastal resources protection and ecological disruption are key if the Dead Sea is to establish itself as a well-preserved and sustainable destination on the tourism map.

The other project, El-Zay, manufactures high quality men's suits. The \$10 million expansion of El Zay will diversify its product line by manufacturing men's outerwear, including uniforms. Developmental benefits include the introduction of high quality standards in the textile industry, the transfer of operating know-how from a major Italian clothing company (Gruppo GFT) and the upgrading of local skills. El-Zay is the first textile company in Jordan to produce high quality suits for export to Europe.

Alo sets the tone in modern telephone services

AMMAN (Star)—The installation of the new public telephone cabins brings good news to Ammanites at a touch of a button. The private company in charge, promises to expand this service in the very near future to other parts of the Kingdom.

This service is launched by the Trans-Jordan for Communication Services Co. (TJCS) which has lately completed the first phase of installing these cabins in many sites covering the Greater Amman area in addition to the Queen Alia International Airport.

Realizing the importance of telecommunications and its vital role in the community, the company, has conducted a detailed study to participate in a tender on public telephones (on 1st April, 1997).

Accordingly, TJCS has won a license to install public telephones in the Kingdom last May, and signed an agreement

with the committee authorized to organize the telecommunications sector to set up a modernized and developed network for public telephones. The total cost of the project is estimated at JD 6 million. According to Shadi-Ramzi Al Majali, general manager of TJCS, there will be about 3000 lines by October next year. TJCS hopes to operate 7000 lines within three years.

Referring to the agreement, this service will in the first stage cover Amman then apply to all parts in Jordan in less than one year time.

The system used a simple logo "alo" cards that are available at affordable prices. There is a card at JD 3, valued for one year for local, national and cellular calls.

Another card is valued JD 15. People can also use it for local, national, cellular and international calls. The validity



Shadi-Ramzi Majali

of these cards depends on the time the cards take by the users.

Speaking at a press conference held last week at the Marriott Hotel, Mr. Majali briefed the audience about the benefits of this system saying that it provides solutions for many difficulties mainly related to the correct coins that might not be readily available for telephones.

He added that the cards could be used many times and the user pays for the minutes his call take.

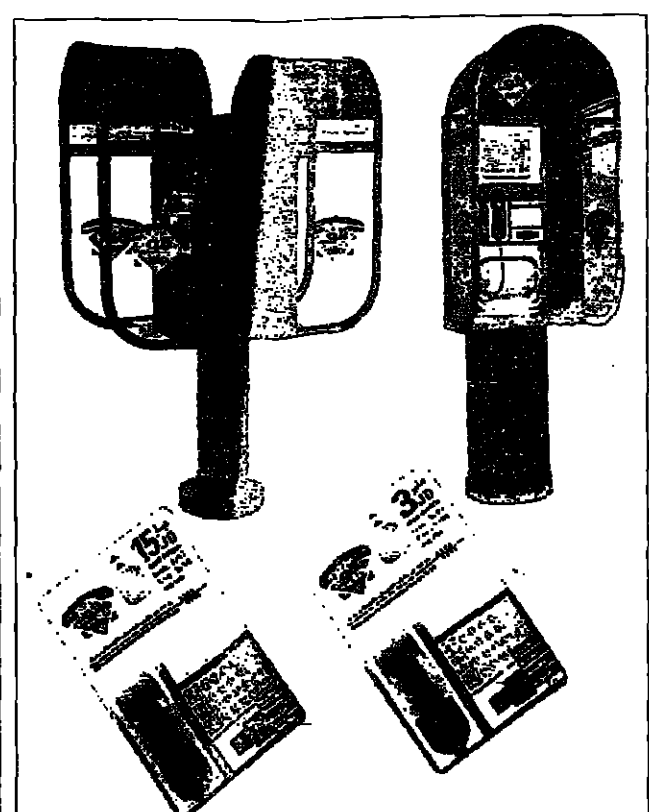
As for the cabins which are imported from Greece, they are designed in a way that protects users from weather conditions and street noise.

All people from all ages as well as the disabled can use these phones easily. The safety factor is also given consideration, especially in case of children users.

The company also gives concern to the humanitarian side, as all calls for emergency, police, use of directory and the civil service are made free of charge in cooperation with the Jordan Telecommunication Company.

Attending the press conference were also the deputy general manager Matthew Vonzantzas and others from the company's staff.

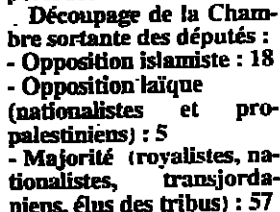
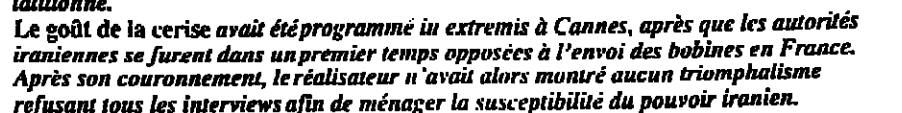
TJCS operates at a capital of JD one million and plans to increase it to reach JD 6 million.



Highest and lowest performing stocks in the Amman Financial Market

SATURDAY	SUNDAY	MONDAY	TUESDAY
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Arab Insurance Al Ra'i East Investment Project 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> International Fund Industry Jordan Kuwait Bank Al Ra'i 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Gulf Bank Jordan Trusting United Land Development 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Jordan Pipe Industry Rafid Plastic Industry Al Ra'i
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> International Tourism Arab Investment Bank Jordan Sulphur 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Jordan for Pipe United Financial Investment Jordan Sulphur 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Central Trade National Sea Lines Al-Ola Industry 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> TAJERCO Jordan Realty Company JIMCO
General Price Pointers	171.289	170.960	171.218
Trade Volume	691811	830163	655777
Stock Volume	441802	529635	468944
Highest Traded Stocks	138962	158408	144656
Lowest Traded Stocks	138962	158408	144656

All data provided by ACCESS Tel: 646868 Fax: 646949



Exposition
 Découvrez la Bretagne avec les toiles de Patrice
 Cudennec exposées au CCF du 29 octobre au
 26 novembre.



Queen Noor meets Arab writers

HER MAJESTY Queen Noor met 80 writers from this country, Egypt and Iraq at the Royal Cultural Center. The writers participated in the Queen Noor Award for Children's Literature. This is an annual prize, instituted by the Noor Al Hussein Foundation in 1988 with the cooperation of the Ministry of Culture. ■



Jordanian musician conducts opera concert in Amman

By Anca de Maio
Special to The Star

Music lovers in Amman had the extraordinary opportunity of going to the opera last week. Titled "An Opera in the Making", the concert was the first purely Jordanian attempt to perform this type of music with the intention of establishing one day a professional opera company in Jordan.

The first of a series of opera concerts to be held over two years, the concert was performed by the Orchestra of the National Music Conservatory (NMC) and conducted by Rida Murtada, a young Jordanian residing and working in Germany. Reflecting the ambitious idea of creating a professional national orchestra and opera (like in Egypt), the project of gradually introducing Mozart's "Marriage of Figaro" to the Jordanian public culminated in presenting the whole opera with complete stage settings and costumes.

"Hopefully this will be possible by the end of next year," says Rida Murtada, the guest conductor of the NMC orchestra, admitting that everything depends on a favourable financial situation.

The first part of the concert was dedicated exclusively to opera, while the second part consisted in playing Mozart's Symphony No. 29.

The overture of "Marriage of Figaro" was followed by five vocal parts (accompanied by orchestra) and performed by the 15-year-old

Jordanian Dima Bawab, a NMC student, and two NMC professors: Svetlana Kupavina and Lukas Cerny.

"Originally we wanted to perform both Mozart and Verdi in this first concert," Mr Murtada tells *The Star*. "Besides the fact that Verdi is even more difficult than Mozart, for playing Verdi you need more instruments and there are not enough advanced players of all these instruments in the NMC orchestra," he explains. "For two weeks we have been working every day, which compared to Europe is quite a lot," he continues, adding that normally in Europe three or four rehearsals are enough for a symphony concert, while 15 days or so over a period of two months is necessary for an opera concert with stage setting.

Rida Murtada, aged 22, made his debut as a guest conductor of the NMC in March this year on the occasion of the 14th meeting of the Arab Academy of Music. After six years of conducting experience, he is still at the beginning of his career. "It is better for a conductor to start young," he said, "like in any profession, for conducting, is a job one learns like any other job. There's nothing unnatural about it."

He disagrees with the idealized image of the conductors of the last century and at the beginning of our century as "Gods of music". "I am for doing music together with the orchestra and not for simply imposing my ideas," he pointed out. "My ideal conductor is the Italian Arturo Toscanini (1867-1957): far from being a showmaster, he was always very

exact and honest in his work," he continues.

"What I am very careful about is the style of an orchestra, because nowadays it is very important for a conductor to encourage the individuality of an orchestra and not to destroy it," he adds.

Asked to describe the style of the NMC orchestra, Mr Murtada admits that even if the teachers and professors (but also the students) had a style of their own, it is difficult to speak about a style of the whole orchestra, because they do not work enough together. "A professional orchestra like the Philharmonics of Berlin, for instance, play every day and has a deep-rooted tradition," he says, "while the orchestra of the NMC is still making its first steps."

According to him, the establishing of a professional orchestra in Jordan depends on the financial support either from the government or other sources that will allow very advanced students of the conservatory to perform music not as a hobby but as a job.

Murtada has wanted to be a conductor since he first played the violin at the age of 10. "Although the best music moments I have lived are those when I play myself, I chose conducting because I prefer working with people than to working alone," he confesses.

When he conducts opera, he has the opportunity to establish even more relations with both instrument players and singers. "Despite the fact that I don't particularly enjoy travelling, I like to work in various places and meet



Murtada

other people with different traditions of music and interpretation," he adds. Murtada has a very heavy schedule. He has already left Amman and conducted a concert that took place in Germany last Wednesday. He will come back to Jordan at the beginning of next year for the second concert of the series "An Opera in the Making." ■

At Horizon, one great achievement leads to another

HERE'S MORE good news soon after Horizon's recent success at the Al Anha's Creative Awards in Kuwait.

This time it carried the day at the Big Apple!

Up-to-date is its roster of successes in the Finalist's Award at the prestigious New York International Advertising Festival, Horizon's Dubai team won the honors for the emphatic Mercedes E-Class advertisement. "When There Is No Competition, We Create Our Own."

Says Gerald M. Goldberg, president, the New York Festivals. "This outstanding achievement does not come easily... From a most competitive field of 10,000 advertising entries from 60 countries, achieving Finalist status is a notable credit to any company's awards roster."

Rafic Saadeh, Chairman of the Horizon network, commented: "It does seem that New York is particularly lucky for Horizon since this is where we had won the Finalist's Award for the GTC Paints' "Language of Colors" campaign done by Horizon Kuwait, way back in 1990."

Getting this recognition from the hub of the advertising world is highly commendable since entries must undergo the scrutiny of expert creative judging panels convened around the world. Only the creme de la creme of entries move on to the finalist stage.

It is worth mentioning that Horizon Dubai's work for Mercedes-Benz has been consistently impressive over the years, winning the Certificate of Merit at the Cresta International Advertising Awards in New York and the IAA Advertising Awards in Dubai. ■

Music from the Baroque era lightens up stage

By Christian Doumit
Special to The Star

THE MUSICAL season has got under way in a thunderous start last week. Under the patronage of Her Majesty Queen Noor, the European Union Baroque Orchestra gave a concert last week with the first half devoted to J.J. Fux, G.F. Handel, and F.H. Biber. With a series of suites, a concerto Grosso, and a programmatic Sonata, performed in an excited and rhapsodic atmosphere, bold modulations, and fascinating ornamental superstructure, it was truly Baroque to the core.

The concert began with a beautiful rendition of the Jordanian national anthem by the orchestra's strings. This was followed by the European Union "national anthem." In this and all the other pieces stood the violin with its strong and brilliant register unwilling to subordinate itself to anything. No doubt the violin became the favorite solo and orchestral instrument of the Baroque era. This leads us to the most typical feature

of Baroque style: ornamentation, equally prominent in all forms of Baroque art. Baroque architecture was fond of repetition. This tendency to echo every idea is present in the music of the period and reaches its ultimate expression in the Concerto principle.

These days "concert" may mean a recital and "concerto" a particular musical composition, but in the Baroque era, it stood for a principle of style, and as such it meant the opposition, the rivalry, and the pitting against each other of musical instruments.

It was the Baroque spirit, with its love of virtuosity and display which caused this elemental principle to become a dominating factor in music and once a fugue or a concerto was under way, it would refuse to pause until it reached its destination. Baroque form gave free rein to the artist's imagination as well as to the performing musicians: pizzicato, tremolo, tapping the wooden part of the bow, and even stamping on the floor.

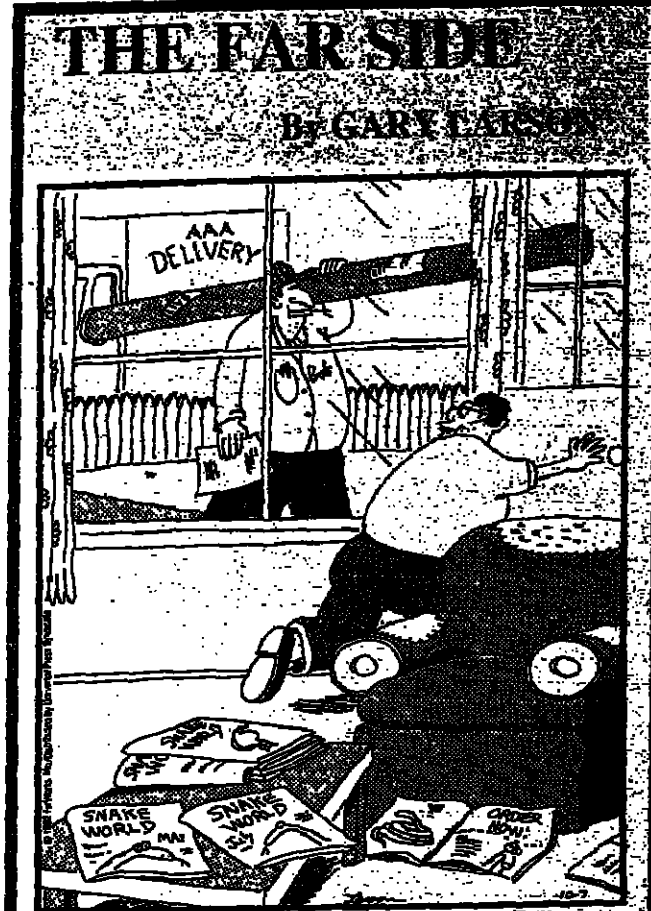
The European Union Baroque Orchestra is headquartered in England and its

members include more than nine different EU nationalities—competing and agreeing like a concerto. There is a clear message behind the orchestra's visit to Jordan.

To borrow the words of Yves Gazzo, the EU Ambassador to Jordan, the event is about interaction and achieving common objectives of peace and stability. In this context it is meaningful that Handel's Concerto Grosso in C Minor Op 6 n. 8 was performed that evening.

Unlike J.S. Bach there is a universal quality in Handel's personality, a certain attitude of the citizen of the world, and that of a European humanist. Handel came to England as an upholder of Italian art and lived there for 45 years. In spite of his German origin, Italian training, and French experience, there are many traits in Handel that give him a close kinship with English music.

He acquired his means of expression, his forms and his technique from German, Italian and French traditions but the ultimate which ripened his art was that of English civilization and culture. ■



A big day for Jimmy



"Tell it again, Gramps! The one about being caught in the shark frenzy off the Great Barrier Reef!"



Kenz seeks active support to continue projects



"KENZ IS a joint venture between three societies: Al Hussein Society for the Physically Handicapped, the Holy Land Institute for the Deaf Swedish Organization for Individual Relief (The Al Hussein Society sewing workshop produces clothing for children, and the carpentry workshops of the Holy Land and the Swedish Organization produce children's furniture).

It is an income generating project that aims to support and sustain the training workshops for the handicapped. The products of the training workshops are sold at "Kenz, the outlet" at the Al Hussein Society premises. The Al Hussein Society manages Kenz. Princess Dina Mired is the president of Kenz.

It is a unique project for the following reasons: ■ It is a cost-saving project in terms of marketing and advertising the products of three societies in one place—it offers job / training opportunities for the handicapped (physical/mental or hearing), who have minimal chance of training or working elsewhere (especially the physically and the mentally handicapped).

■ It is a positive project, in that it stresses the capabilities (as opposed to the incapacities) of persons suffering with handicap, through their well-made beautiful products.

■ It aims to market other charitable organization products in the near future.

KENZ officially opened on 18 April 1996 under the patronage of TRH Princess Inan and Princess Raya.

The Al Hussein Society Sewing Workshop is short of working capital. The project started from zero budget and a lot of volunteer work.

(who will be needed to teach 4 new physically handicapped persons in the sewing workshop)

The society needs your support in these areas to help it cover the start up costs and provide it with some working capital so that it can plan in advance and hence be more efficient as an income generating project. ■

Towards better skills Coca Cola trains employees in Jordan

THE COCA Cola Company organized two training courses for its employees, old and new, at the factory in Madaba last Wednesday and Thursday.

The first course, titled "A Day in the Life of a Coca Cola Route Salesman", revolved around sales and distribution training, and included a tour of the plant and the warehouses. The course aimed to strengthen the ties between the plant employees and sales and distribution people. The second course, specifically designed for new supervisors in the company, was a general orientation course of the plant and the company.

The course was inaugurated by Mr. Azem Omar Yousef, General Manager of the Coca Cola Bottling Company in Jordan, and a number of the Coca Cola Company's employees in Jordan and abroad.

Training and Development Manager for Coca Cola Near East Mr. Francisco Monrad stated: "These training courses are part of extensive programs designed by the Coca Cola Company to improve local skills in an effort to ensure the quality of its product and services. It is also in line with the company's policy of hiring and training of local labor, exchanging of expertise and constant innovation in the plant."

The Coca Cola Company in Jordan has approximately 700 Jordanian employees. ■



Exhibitions

■ Artworks by Abdul Kader Bakheet continues at Instituto Cervantes ends today 30 October.

■ Painting and waving entitled "Murmurs of Our Land" by Riham Ghassib and Bani Hamida at Bani Hamida House ends today 30 October.

■ Paintings by Bahraini artist Sheikh Rashid Al Khalifa continues at Darat al Funun till 15 Nov.

■ Art Exhibition by Patrice Cudennee continues at the French Cultural Center till 26 Nov.

■ An Exhibition of Jewels at Darat al Funun continues till 15 Nov.

■ Graphic exhibition by Abdul Wahab Abdel Mohsen continues at Balad Art Gallery till 5 Nov.

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The Star's TV GUIDE

Programs on JTV
from 1—7 November

Amman cinemas

- Philadelphia I (Tel: 634149): Escape From L.A
- Philadelphia II (Tel: 634149): Clueless
- Plaza (Tel: 699238): Double Team
- Concord I (Tel: 677420): Client
- Concord II (Tel: 677420): Too Hot To Handle
- Galleria I (Tel: 634149): Con. Air
- Galleria II (Tel: 634149): Double Team

MOVIE GUIDE

Independent, Limited and Foreign-Language Releases

action two men take against a vulnerable member of the opposite sex is the equivalent of a psychological snuff film. (R, for language and emotional abuse.)

● **KISS & TELL:** The bizarre murder of a stripper (Justine Bateman) is the basis for this improvisational comedy. (Unrated.)

● **THE LIVING SEA:** Greg MacGillivray's short celebrates the beauty and infinite variety of ocean life while making us realize that the sea is as fragile as it is essential to our very existence. Narrated by Meryl Streep with music by Sting. (Unrated. Suitable for everyone.)

● **THE LONG WAY HOME:** Mark Jonathan Harris' superb documentary surveys with clarity and calmness the three harrowing years between the end of World War II and the formation of the state of Israel. The result is an eloquent saga of timeless impact and enduring significance. (Unrated.)

● **THE METHOD:** Sophomore tale about some college drama students staging a senior thesis play about a bank robbery and craving to make their art "real." With Nick Sadler, Sean Patrick Flanery, Michael Bondies and Tyrin Turner. (Unrated.)

● **MRS. BROWN:** Judi Dench and Billy Connolly take the leads in the story of the relationship between grief-stricken Queen Victoria and irreverent Highlander John Brown in 1864. (PG)

● **LOVE AMERICA (OR HONK IF YOU LOVE BUDDHA):** In her delightfully wry documentary, Renee Tajima-Pen@a attempts to answer the question, in regard to Asian Americans, "Will we truly ever belong in America?" In the process Tajima-Pen@a meets a wide variety of people in a cross-country tour and attempts to come to terms with her own identity as a Japanese American. (Unrated.)

● **THE MYTH OF FINGERPRINTS:** With a gift for creating character and an ear for the anxiety that always creeps in when families dare to gather, writer-director Bart Freundlich brings welcome passion to a traditional story of relationships. Stars include Roy Scheider, Noah Wyle, Blythe Danner and Julianne Moore. (R for sexuality and language.)

● **NAPOLEON:** Adam Wylie, Bronson Pinchot, David Ogden Stiers and Joan Rivers are among those supplying voices to the title character, a golden retriever puppy, and the many critters he encounters in his Australian outback adventure. (G.)

● **WASHINGTON SQUARE:** Hampered by widely divergent performances and a troubling tendency toward the obvious, this new take on the Henry James novella wastes solid work by Jennifer Jason Leigh and proves that William Wyler's version, "The Heiress," was one film that didn't cry out to be remade. (PG)

● **CAPITAINE CONAN:** Bertrand Tavernier's superb World War I epic takes place in the Balkans, where the French continue fighting long after the Armistice. The film resonates with the complex and conflicting national interests and allegiances in that region that have erupted all over again in recent years. Philippe Torreton and Samuel Le Bihan play French soldiers who try to transcend differences in rank, class and temperament. (Unrated.)

● **CAREER GIRLS:** Two college roommates (Lynn Steadman and "Naked's" Katrin Cartlidge) reunite for a London weekend in the latest work from British director Mike Leigh, celebrated for creating emotionally whole characters (as he did in "Secrets & Lies") who are so persuasive it's difficult to get them out of your mind. (R)

● **CRIS OF SILENCE:** In Avery Crounse's exquisitely wrought drama, a young surgeon (Kathleen York) rescues a girl of about 15 (Erin Buchanan) in the aftermath of a hurricane, only to learn she cannot speak and may or may not be retarded. Suspense and evolving relationships ensue. Karen Black also stars as York's distant mother. (Unrated.)

● **DELINQUENT:** This low-budget, high-quality production is a terrific suspense picture, more concerned with character than cheap thrills, in which an estrangement between a sensitive teenager (Desmond Devenish), in the throes of coming of age, and his ignorant, mean-spirited father (Jeff Paul) escalates dangerously. A most impressive first feature from writer-director Peter Hall. With Shawn Batten. (Unrated.)

● **THE END OF VIOLENCE:** Wim Wenders' film is as ambitious as its title, a contemplation of the various forms of violence that characterize modern life and a wry take on L.A. in general and Hollywood in particular. Highly complicated and more art film than thriller, it stars Bill Pullman as a ruthless producer and Gabriel Byrne as a surveillance expert for the FBI who is beginning to worry about the Big Brother aspects of his secret project. Little does he know.... (R)

● **FAMILY NAME:** Filmmaker Macky Alston, a 31-year-old gay white man, goes in search of his family's roots and finds that many of his relations are African American. Winner of the Freedom of Expression Award at Sundance. (Unrated.)

● **FAST, CHEAP & OUT OF CONTROL:** Documentarian Errol Morris ("The Thin Blue Line," "A Brief History of Time") considers the nature of a life's work by profiling four unusual professionals. (PG)

● **IN THE COMPANY OF MEN:** Writer-director Neil LaBute has a gift for making audiences squirm, but that's all. This unpleasant detailing of the sadistic

ENGLISH PROGRAMS

SATURDAY
2:00—Holy Koran
2:10—Twinkle
2:30—Muppet Show
3:00—World of Geo
4:00—The Vally Between
4:30—Neighbors
5:00—French Programs
7:30—News Headlines
7:35—Are you Been Served
8:00—Newly Weds
8:30—Prism
9:10—Time Trax
10:00—News at Ten
10:30—Feature Film
12:00—Allen

SUNDAY
2:00—Holy Koran
2:10—Little Rosey
2:30—Jonny Quest
3:00—Energy Express
3:40—Lucky Luke
4:00—American Chart Show
4:30—Tarazan
6:00—French Programs
7:30—News in French
7:30—News Headlines
7:35—Fresh Prince of Bel Air
8:00—Cinema, Cinema, Cinema
8:30—Struggle for Democracy
9:10—Renegade
10:00—News at Ten
10:30—The Bourne Identity
11:15—Drama

MONDAY
2:00—Holy Koran
2:10—The Show With The Mouse
2:30—Cowboy of the Moomesa
3:00—Gillette Sports Special
3:30—Riding High
4:00—Animal Show
4:30—Neighbors



Fresh Prince of Bel Air, Sunday 7:35 pm

5:15—French Programs
7:30—News Headlines
7:35—Are you Been Served
8:00—Murphy Brown
8:30—Babylon 5
9:10—Highlander
10:00—News at Ten
10:30—Emergency Room (e.r.)
11:15—Homicide

TUESDAY
2:00—Holy Koran
2:10—Sandocan
2:30—C.R.O.
3:00—Skippy
3:30—The Album Show
4:30—Square One T.V.
5:15—French Programs
7:30—News in French
7:30—News Headlines
7:35—Sara
8:00—Tilt
8:30—Encounter

9:10—Nature of Things
10:00—News at Ten
10:30—Marguerite Voland
11:15—Gully

WEDNESDAY
2:00—Holy Koran
2:10—Jonny Quest
2:30—Super Daud
3:00—Secrets of Treasure Island
3:30—Spell Binder
4:00—Monsters Today
4:30—Border Town
6:00—French Programs
7:30—News in French
7:30—News Headlines
7:35—Neighbors
8:00—Grace under Fire
8:30—Challenges
9:10—Kung-Fu
10:00—News at Ten
10:25—Land's End
11:00—American Gothic

THURSDAY
2:00—Holy Koran
2:10—New Kids on the Block
2:30—My Little Fairy Tale
3:00—America's Funniest People
3:30—He Shoot He Scores
4:00—I Love Lucy
4:30—The Boy from Andromeda
5:00—French Programs
7:30—News in French
7:30—News Headlines
7:35—Trivial Pursuit
8:00—Parenthood
8:30—Lois and Clark (Superman)
9:10—Winfrey Show
10:00—News at Ten
10:30—Feature Film
12:00—Cinema Club

FRIDAY
2:00—Holy Koran
2:10—Leo The Lion
2:30—Fred And Barney
3:00—Wish Bone
3:30—Lucky Luke
4:00—Family Matters
4:30—NBA
5:30—French Film
7:00—News in French
7:30—News Headlines
7:35—Are you Been Served
8:00—The Health Show
8:30—Adventures of Brisco County
9:10—Mother Terra
10:00—News at Ten
10:30—Best Seller
11:15—Feature Film

PROGRAMMES EN FRANÇAIS
SAMEDI
5:00—Secrets de famille
5:30—Des chiffres et des lettres

6:00—La rose des vents
7:00—Le journal
7:15—Magazine
L'œil de Colomb

DIMANCHE
5:00—Secrets de famille
5:30—Des chiffres et des lettres
6:00—Magazine
Faut pas rêver
7:00—Le journal
7:15—Magazine pour tous
Zivv

LUNDI
5:00—Secrets de famille
5:30—Des chiffres et des lettres
6:00—Thalassia
7:00—Le journal
7:15—Magazine scientifique
Cinq sur cinq

MARDI
5:00—Secrets de famille
5:30—Des chiffres et des lettres
6:00—Savoir plus santé
7:00—Le journal
7:15—Orient sur Seine

MERCREDI
5:00—Secrets de famille
5:30—Des chiffres et des lettres
6:00—Ushuaia
7:00—Le journal
7:15—E = M6

JEUDI
5:00—L'invité de marque
5:30—Fort Boyard
7:00—Le journal
7:15—Le dessous des cartes

VENREDI
5:30—Madame la conseillère
7:00—Le journal
7:15—Magazine

Programs are subject to change by JTV

SONY INTRODUCES

LCD PROJECTORS

FOR THE

NEXT GENERATION

VPL - 8500
Portable Projector
XGA, SVGA, VGA •
True 800 x 600 resolution •
450 ANSI Lumens •
3 LCD panels •
Remote commander with •
mouse control •
Mac and PC compatible •
Approx. 10 kg •

VPL - W400
Entertainment Projector
High definition wide screen •
capability •
400 ANSI Lumens •
3 LCD panels •
Remote commander •
Approx. 10 kg •

VPL - 8800
High Brightness Projector
XGA, SVGA, VGA •
True 800 x 600 resolution •
700 ANSI Lumens •
3 LCD panels •
Remote commander •
Mac and PC compatible •

SONY

GENERATIONS AHEAD

For a free colour brochure of the entire range of Sony projectors and presentation tools, please complete this coupon and either fax or mail it to the address below.

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Ever felt like this?

1807

The ad that sold the world

By Thomas Frank

"IF YOU want to show you've gotten somewhere, get a beautiful car. But if you simply want to get somewhere, get a Volkswagen."

Volkswagen advertisement, 1966.

That by the end of the 1960s the Volkswagen had acquired an image more hip than Nazi must be regarded as one of the great triumphs of American marketing.

As a form of anti-advertising "no fancy gadgets, run by push buttons", the "ugly, little bug" Volkswagen series, on billboards, in magazines and on television, introduced the world to a new aesthetic of consuming.

No longer would advertising labour to construct an idealized but self-evidently false vision of consumer perfection. Instead, it would offer itself as an antidote to the patent absurdities of affluence.

The idea was a great innovation of the 1960s, the magic formula by which the life of consumerism could be extended indefinitely, running on the discontent that it itself had produced.

"Hip" was the solution to the problems of the mass society, although not in the way the ideologues had intended. Disgust with the consumer society was the best product pitch, applicable to almost anything: Buy This to Escape Consumerism.

Capitalism was entering the space age in the 1960s and Organization Man, the Man in the Grey Flannel Suit, was a drug not only as a parent, but as an executive. The old values of caution, deference and hierarchy drowned creativity and denied flexibility.

And when business leaders cast their gaze on the youth culture bubbling around them, they saw a reflection of their own struggle and an affirmation of a dynamic consuming order that would replace the old.

For these business thinkers, the cultural revolution that has come to be symbolized by the counter-culture seemed to be an affirmation of their own revolutionary faith, a reflection of their own struggles to call their corporate colleagues into step with the chaotic and frenetically changing economic universe.

The corporate revolution of the 1960s has never ended. In the 1990s, when the world was awakening to the realities of hyper-accelerated global information economy, the language of the 1960s has made a triumphant return. The corporate theory of the 1990s makes explicit references to 1960s management theory and the experiences of the counter-culture.

Like the laid-back executives who personify it, the ideology of information capitalism is a child of the 1960s: the intervention, but have hardly defused its urgency. One industry advertising has provided the clues, the images, and the pithy punchlines.

After all, it was a US clothing retailer, not Marx or Mao or Castro, who delivered this call to arms in 1968: "Men of the world, arise! The revolution has begun and fashion is at the barricades. Charge into Chapman's shops for men and lead the way to this new-found freedom in men's clothes."

Advertising agencies, according to the common media image of the 1990s, are exceedingly hip places. Advertising people are deeply immersed in the

tastes, the music, and the slang of young people, obsessed with the rapid movement of youth culture. And, being an industry that burns out creative talents in an extraordinarily short time, it is a world actually populated by young people.

But in the 1940s, '50s and '60s, the image was very different. Madison Avenue was "Ulcer Gulch". It was a shrine of conformity. American admen were hopeless yes-men, dedicated to affirming their clients' every whim and suffering from an excess of three-Martini lunches.

The central principle of the industry was "science" and there was one reliable method of convincing the consumer to buy: offer him or her a "unique selling proposition".

And so, Playtex girdles had a "Seven-way stretch", and Wonder Bread "helps build strong bodies 12 ways", while "You can have a lovelier complexion in 14 days with Palmolive soap, doctors prove!" and Fab detergent had "five extra laundrys".

To flip through any copy of Life from the 1950s is to understand almost instantly that the ads produced were perhaps the worst, given their social and cultural context, that Madison Avenue has ever created.

One looks in vain for anything that deviates even slightly from the cold war orthodoxy of prosperity, progress, and consumer satisfaction. Never had advertising been so unwilling to acknowledge the myriad petty frustrations, the anger, the fear that make up so much of daily existence. And never had it been so vulnerable to mockery, nor to the emergence of a prophet whose influence on the western world has hardly been appreciated.

The towering figure of the advertising world of the 1960s and a man of immense cultural significance was Bill Bernbach, the guiding spirit of Doyle Dane Bernbach agency. DDB altered the look, language and tone of advertising with its long-running campaign for Volkswagen and dozens of other brands. Bernbach was at once a hard-headed adman and one of post-war consumerism's most trenchant critics.

He was the first adman to appeal directly to the public but unmentionable public fears of conformity, of manipulation, of fraud, and of powerlessness, and to sell products by doing so. He invented anti-advertising; he harnessed public mistrust of consumerism to the cause of

consumerism itself.

Bernbach was an ideologue of disorder, an untiring propagandist for the business value of the principles of modern art. A booklet of his memorable sayings compiled by DDB begins with this aphorism: "Rules are what the artist breaks; the memorable never emerged from a formula." "Imitation can be commercial suicide," runs another.

In practice, he maximized the freedom of creative workers and eliminated much of the hierarchy and bureaucracy customary at large agencies in the 1950s.

He placed limitations on clients' authority that led directly to the rapidly escalating willingness to violate the conventions of commercial speech. A number of DDB's most famous campaigns, such as the Volkswagen ads that played on the car's ugliness, and the Avis ads that proclaimed "We're Number Two", were extremely distasteful to clients and would surely have been axed had the clients not already agreed to defer to the agency's decision.

The advertising that DDB began making for Volkswagen in 1959 is one of the most analyzed, discussed and admired campaigns in the industry's history, studied in introductory marketing classes and included in advertising retrospectives of all kinds.

The campaign's power derived from its blatant transgression of nearly every convention of auto advertising. Its success validated overnight the Bernbach creative philosophy, set off a thousand corporations in search of similar ads for themselves and precipitated a revolution in ad making.

The history of the consumer society is largely the history of the automobile, of the prosperity it brought to blue-collar workers, of the mobility and sexual freedom it permitted, and of the myriad consumer fantasies with which it was associated in the years after the second world war.

Cars then were designed and advertised to resemble the exciting hardware of the cold war: streamlined, finned like aeroplanes, decorated with flashing chrome and abstract representations of rockets.

A Dodge ad declared that the new Sweep-Wing look for '59 is set off by thrusting Jet-Tail Lamps. The pinnacle of boorishness was reached in ads for the 1961 Buick: "What a wonderful sense of well-being just being seen behind its wheel. No showing off. Just that Clean



Ads of the modern world are designed to enjoy as much as to sell

Look of Action which unmistakably tells your success."

The DDB debunking campaign for Volkswagen began in 1959, puncturing the myths in the very year that enormous tailfins were at their largest on cars made by General Motors. The early ads were startlingly minimalist and in black and white. They were always organized around a pun or joke, a rare thing at the time.

Instead of boasting with Technicolor glare, the artwork committed such bizarre heresies as including only a tiny picture in the upper-left hand corner of an almost blank page, depicting the car floating in water, drawn on to an egg, dented in an accident, crushed by a car scrapping machine, or absent altogether except for a pair of tracks in the snow.

What made the Volkswagen ads seem "honest" were the curious admissions of (what appeared to be) errors. The station wagon was a "monster" that "looked like a shoe box", while an experimental model that never made it to production was "something awful. Take our word for it."

Then there were the occasional admissions that Volkswa-

gen was, like everyone else, profit-driven "since we have this burning desire to stay in business."

At times, DDB even encouraged readers to demystify the techniques of ad-making. As one ad from 1964 put it, rather disingenuously: "Just because we sell cars doesn't put selling at the top of our agenda." So similar in format were the various Volkswagen print ads, and so familiar to readers, that in 1963 the company ran an ad with no picture, no headline, three blank columns, and instructions on "How to do a Volkswagen ad".

Addressing the "real" problems of society and outlining "real" differences was the story of advertising in the 1960s. As the decade progressed, Bill Bernbach's values and his revolutionary restructuring of the creative process spread rapidly through the industry.

The rage for creativity was fuelled partly by the demands of the admen, but more importantly by the traditional buyers of advertising, the big blue-chip clients, who, impressed by the formula they saw in the Volkswagen campaign, demanded similar

work from their agencies.

After the post-war years of predictability and Utopian fantasy, western capitalism suddenly developed an enthusiasm for graphic sophistication, for naturalism, for nonconformity, and for wilful transgression.

Virtually anyone who lived through the 1960s in the US remembers advertising's strange and sudden infatuation with counter-cultural imagery, its overnight conversion to rock music and scenes of teenagers dancing their strange indecipherable dances.

Models on television became younger, gave up their clean appearances for long hair and rebel garb, and traded ingratiating smiles for serious stares at the camera. The fault lines of advertising had changed, seismic and suddenly. One day in 1967, Madison Avenue shed his grey flannel suit and leapt headlong into youth culture. He is yet to return.

The names given by admen to their target market were "young thinking", a rubric under which everybody, the function of "youth" in advertising was symbolic, an easy metaphor for a new consumer value-system.

A Business Week article in 1970 predicted: "The 1970s promises to become the decade when youth becomes a state of mind and overflows all traditional age boundaries...whether they are marketing to youth or to youthfulness. Businessmen find the prospects exhilarating."

Through the proliferation of psychedelia and "Yellow Submarine" art, advertisers were careful to speak a language that sounded hip but got a message across to young and old alike. The favourite advertising term for the counter-culture was the "Now Generation", which implied absolute up-to-dateness.

It also intimated what admen felt was the young's most important characteristic: as consumers, their desire for immediate gratification; their craving for the new; their intolerance for the slow moving, the perfunctory and the thrifty. Thus began the consumer revolt against mass society.

From Thomas Frank's *The Conquest of Cool*, published next week by the University of Chicago Press, 272 pages, £18.25.

Financial Times Syndication

ROCK TRACKS

By Stacy Jenel Smith

U2 guitarist The Edge became a father for the fourth time last month, with a daughter born to his girlfriend, L.A.-based dancer-choreographer Morleigh Steinberg. Edge is still wed to Aislinn O'Sullivan, with whom he has three children. The couple split long ago, but Irish laws make it extremely difficult to sever marital bonds. The new baby's timing couldn't have been much better for Edge's schedule. U2 completed the Euro leg of its "PopMan" tour with a date in Tel Aviv Sept. 30, a Tuesday, and Edge flew to L.A. immediately to wait out the birth of the babe (due mid-October) with Morleigh. Then — surprise! — he found himself waiting a matter of hours, rather than days. He had three weeks off before he had to rejoin U2 for the second North America leg of the "PopMan" concert trek. By the way, Morleigh will be remembered by many U2 fans as the "Mysterious Ways" belly dancer on the outdoor leg of the Zoo TV Tour a few years back.

Barbra Streisand and Celine Dion were very pleased with themselves for managing to slip into and out of a Hollywood recording studio to wax their "Tell Him" duet — with nary a paparazzo catching on and coming to snap them. The superstar divas did have celeb photog Herb Ritts on hand to record their teaming. Funny, isn't it? Streisand and Dion became friends after all the silliness over Barbra having been in the ladies room when Celine was singing during the last Oscar show.

New Kids on the Block members Donnie Wahlberg, Joe McIntire and Jordan Knight have been making music together again. But it's not for a New Kids on the Block reunion, reports Wahlberg. The singer-cum-actor, who owns his own recording studio and production/publishing company, produced a couple of tracks for both McIntire and Knight's solo albums, due out early next year. He says a reunion of their old group is not going to happen anytime soon. "I've really been blessed, even during the New Kids thing, that I sort of got to branch out on my own," says Wahlberg. "I got a chance to find myself outside the group. The other guys are really just starting to get to do that and until they experience that, I think any reunion would be unlikely."

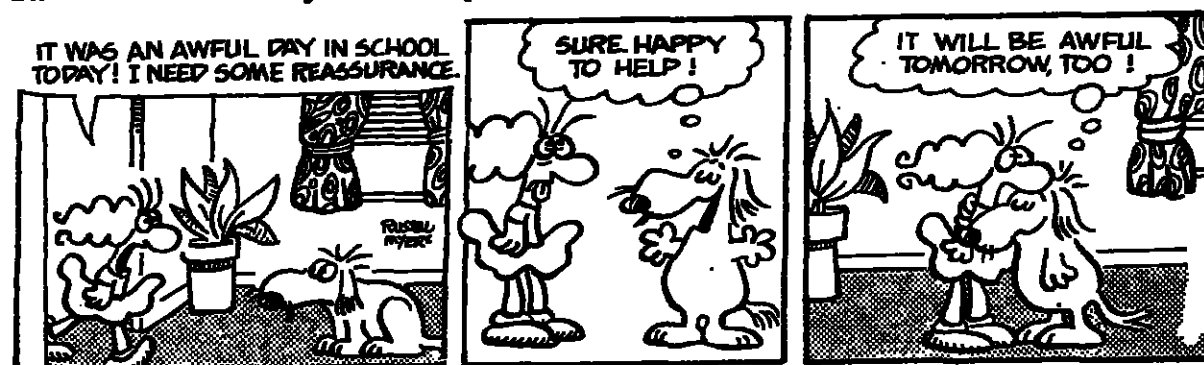
Debby Boone is surprised country star LeAnn Rimes has a new hit version of Debby's 20-year-old monster smash "You Light Up My Life." She confesses, "I know it's been 20 years, but somehow it still seems too soon for the song to be back out there." She points out that her husband, Gabriel Ferrer, says, "You'd think people would still be sick of it." (Hey! He said it, we didn't!) Right now, Boone and Ferrer are busy launching their latest children's book, "Night-lights." They've done five, with Debby writing and Gabriel illustrating, and she says she's "shocked" that they've wound up on top of the kids' bestseller lists. As for her music, "I'm in a real transition — deciding what to do next." How about heavy metal, like her father, Pat Boone? "Not a chance! I'll just leave that to the old man."

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SLAPSTIX
Pressure is something you feel when you don't know what you're doing.

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PERKY & BEANZ by Russell Myers



ELWOOD by Ben Templeton & Tom Forman



CATFISH by Fred Wagner & Tom Cone



Bridge

Send A Message
By Omar Sharif and Tamara Hirsch

Both vulnerable. North deals.

NORTH
♠ A 5 3 2
♥ Void
♦ A 10 9
♣ K Q 8 7 5 2

WEST
♠ 10 6
♥ Q 9 8 6 5
♦ K 3 2
♣ A J 3

EAST
♠ K Q J 8 7
♥ 10 4 3 2
♦ 8 5 4
♣ 4

SOUTH
♠ 9 4
♥ A K J 7
♦ Q J 7 6
♣ 10 9 6

The bidding:

North East South West

1♠ Pass 10 Pass

1♠ Pass 2NT Pass

30 Pass 3NT Pass

Pass Pass

Opening lead: Six of ♠

Had this deal occurred at rubber bridge, it would have been over in two minutes and forgotten as quickly. But it was dealt in a pair event, where overtricks are vital.

North kept probing for a suit contract. Most of South's strength, however, was in North's short suit, where three no trump was a popular contract.

The usual opening lead was a low heart. Where declarer won the first trick with the jack, the usual continuation was a club to the king and a diamond back to the queen and king.

Since there was no point to a heart continuation, most Wests found the spade shift. Declarer held up for a round or two, but two tricks were the maximum that could be made.

One declarer made 11 tricks. Instead of winning the first heart with the jack, South took the trick with the king. This conveyed to West the impression that East had started with J 10 in the suit. On winning the king of diamonds, therefore, West was delighted at the opportunity to know out declarer's remaining heart stopper while still holding the ace of clubs.

It did not work out quite that way. Declarer won the heart continuation with the jack and led another club. No matter how the defense reacted, declarer could collect one spade, three hearts and seven tricks in the minor suits for a second overtrick and top on the board.

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Turkish fashion sparkle at Inter.Con



UNDER THE patronage of HRH Princess Aisha Bint Al Hussein, a Turkish fashion show was held at the Inter-Continental Hotel on 24 and 25 October.

Turkish fashion designer Zubal Yorganicoglu impressed Jordanians with her beautiful designs during the show held at the Inter-Continental Hotel, Jordan.

The show was attended by HRH Princess Aisha Bint Al Hussein, HRH Princess Alia Al Faisal, HRH Princess Majda Raad, Foreign Minister, Mr Fayez Tarawneh, and the Turkish Ambassador to Jordan, Mr Ahmet Suha Umar.

The show included dresses and caftans created by Ms. Yorganicoglu. The gowns had the fascinating Turkish embroidery designs made on silk, satin and velvet dresses and caftans.

The dresses were presented by top professional models from Turkey, who managed to add a mystic flavor to the show.

The fashion show was organized under the patronage of HRH Princess Aisha Bint El Hussein and part of the proceeds were donated to The Al Hussein Society for the Rehabilitation of the Physically Handicapped. The main sponsors of the event were the Turkish Embassy, Royal Jordanian, Turkish Airlines, ATA Construction, Industry and Inter-Continental Hotel Jordan.



The Stones are not the best

They're merely the greatest

By J.D. Considine

DO THE Rolling Stones even matter any more?

It may seem an odd question to ask, given the amount of attention the band is generating. Not only are the Stones on tour at the moment, playing sold-out stadiums all across America, but the group is in the midst of a full-on media blitz, with concert performances on MTV and VH1 scheduled and a Rolling Stone cover in the works.

Taken in terms of sheer celebrity, the Stones are definitely hot stuff. So why don't people care about the band's music anymore?

There was a time when the release of a new Rolling Stones album was an event. Back then, the band was seen as edgy and dangerous, a menacing reminder of how scary popular culture could be. And its recordings reflected that. From the seductive malevolence of "Sympathy for the Devil" and "Midnight Rambler" to the perverse sexual politics of "Under My Thumb" and "Some Girls," each new Rolling Stones record was guaranteed to be provocative.

Now, it's just product. "Bridges to Babylon," the band's latest release, is solid, professional and about as likely to offend as a "Cheers" rerun.

It lacks the sonic aggression of Nine Inch Nails and the pukeish wit of Beck; it's not as scary as Marilyn Manson and can't approach the rhythmic intensity of the Chemical Brothers. Instead, the current Stones sound is familiar, traditional, safe. It's the sort of thing that would make a perfectly acceptable Father's Day present—assuming, of course, dad isn't all that young.

Needless to say, "Bridges to Babylon" hasn't exactly knocked the music world on its ear. The album entered the Billboard charts at No. 3—higher than the new Bob Dylan, lower than the last

Paul McCartney—but dropped out of the Top 10 the following week. Worse, "Anybody Seen My Baby," the album's first single, hasn't even dented the Billboard Hot 100.

Somehow, though, the Stones remain a box-office phenomenon. The "Bridges to Babylon" tour sold out a half-dozen stadiums before anyone had heard so much as a note of the new album. Even more impressive is the fact that Stones tickets are selling at a time when even multi-platinum acts have trouble filling seats.

But seeing the Stones at this stage of the game has nothing to do with the group's latest release, much less its once-rebellious image. It isn't about the elaborate stage show or even how well the band is playing these days.

What it's about is fame. Name-recognition. The opportunity to boast about having seen The World's Greatest Rock 'n' Roll Band.

In a sense, the Stones have become the rock 'n' roll equivalent of the Mona Lisa, a musical icon whose recognition factor has long since transcended the need for entertainment value. The band has long since become a part of the cultural firmament, with Mick Jagger, Keith Richards, Charlie Watts and Ron Woods being as recognizable to roadies as the faces on Mount Rushmore.

Likewise, the band's sonic signature—Jagger's drawling croon, Richards' choked guitar chords, Watts' loose-limbed backbeat—is one of the most recognizable in rock, a sound that has inspired countless imitators over the years. We all know the classic Stones recordings, have heard them each a thousand times or more. Yet even the most familiar moments, be it the clanking cowbell that kicks off "Honky Tonk Women" or the "duo-doo!" harmonies that support "Sympathy for the Devil," still retain potency, their power.



The key word in all this is "classic." Those recordings haven't just endured; they've gained value over the years, turning from Top-40 hits into modern musical monuments. As with the best-known works of Beethoven or the Beatles, those classic Stones recordings are basic knowledge for any well-rounded music fan. Not to recognize the riff from "Satisfaction" is almost as embarrassing as not knowing the first four notes of Beethoven's fifth symphony.

Unlike most of the musicians whose work we consider classics, the Stones are still around to offer first-hand evidence of how the music should sound. So seeing the Stones becomes some-

thing of a pilgrimage, an act of homage to the power of rock 'n' roll.

In that sense, the Rolling Stones truly are The World's Greatest Rock 'n' Roll Band. It doesn't matter that they don't have the most modern sound on MTV—the Stones will be valued long after the current Buzz Bin bands are forgotten.

So, yeah, the Rolling Stones do matter, in the same way as Duke Ellington, Frank Sinatra and James Brown. Because not everything in popular culture is faddish, ephemeral or forgettable.

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